

**Somers Board of Education Regular Meeting
Somers Board of Education Chambers**

Monday, April 27, 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, Dr. Sharon Goulet, Anne Kirkpatrick, Shane Manning, Gina Olearczyk, Derek Zelek

Absent BOE Members: JT Galloway, Kim Radziewicz

Others: Dr. Sam Galloway, Stephanie Levin, Dr. Jamie Rechenberg, Erin Clark, Aja Drummond, Jessica Chen

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1. Approval of the March 23, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the minutes from the March 23, 2026 Board meeting.

Motion to approve minutes from March 23, 2026 Regular Meeting. This motion, made by Gina Olearczyk and seconded by Derek Zelek, Carried. **Yea: 7, Nay: 0, Absent: 2 (JT Galloway, Kim Radziewicz)**

3.2. Approval of the April 2, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the minutes from the April 2, 2026 special meeting.

Motion to approve minutes from April 2, 2026 Special Meeting. This motion, made by Derek Zelek and seconded by Anne Kirkpatrick, Carried. **Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2 (JT Galloway, Kim Radziewicz), Abstain: 1 (Gina Olearczyk)**

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

4.1. Superintendent Update

Superintendent Galloway presented the proposed school budget at the Town Public Hearing on 4/21/26. Chair Briggs and Board Member Gina Olearczyk attended. Discussion focused primarily on concerns regarding property revaluation and its impact on property taxes. Only a few questions related to the school budget were raised.

SHS is now recognized among the top ten in the state for the largest growth in participation in the UConn Early College Experience (ECE) program between 2024 and 2026.

Two representatives from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges visited Somers on 4/22/26. Somers is one of eight districts in the state seeking district accreditation. Ms. Kathy Greider and Mr. Paul Smith, both retired superintendents, met with the Somers team to provide an overview of the accreditation process. Mr. Smith will attend the Board of Education meeting on 5/11/26 to speak with the full Board.

Historically, the accreditation process has focused only on high schools. This district-wide accreditation represents another step toward district coherence and alignment across schools.

Mrs. Jennifer O'Brien has joined Somers Public Schools as the Human Resources Specialist, replacing Mrs. Lori Caron. Mrs. O'Brien previously served in Glastonbury Public Schools.

4.2. SHS Student Representatives

Rationale: SHS student representatives will update the Board on recent events.

Discussion: SHS students Aja Drammeh and Jessica Chen presented recent and upcoming events at SHS. Recent events include:

- Junior Planning Night on 3/24/26
- SAT Academy on 3/28/26
- SAT Exam on 3/31/26
- Trade Fair on 4/2/26
- Start of Quarter 4 on 4/6/26
- Spain Field Trip from 4/2/26 to 4/11/26
- Pep Rally on 4/10/26
- Spring Break from 4/13/26 to 4/17/26
- Film Studies Movie Theater Trip
- Quebec Trip from 4/23/26 to 4/26/26
- Limerock Car Race on 4/24/26

A new recycling program began on 4/27/26 to improve recycling efforts and reduce food waste during lunch. The program was inspired by a student Capstone project.

Photos from the Spain Field Trip were shared. Attendees enjoyed connecting with

students from other schools while on the trip. Photos from the Trade Fair were also shared. Student feedback indicated that the fair was more hands-on and interactive than in previous years. The Trade Fair is organized by Mr. Nick Kosloski, CTE teacher. Approximately 15 to 20 new speakers attended this year, representing a wider range of industries and helping students gain a stronger understanding of future options.

Student representatives shared the senior tradition of wearing togas to the Pep Rally. Photos from the Quebec Trip were also shared. Students had the opportunity to practice their language skills during the trip.

Students spoke enthusiastically about their experience on the Washington, D.C. field trip and encouraged the Board to continue supporting the trip.

Sports highlights were shared for boys' and girls' lacrosse, track and field, baseball, and softball. All sports currently have a winning record. On 4/25/26, the district celebrated a "Spartan Shut Out," with the baseball team and both lacrosse teams winning their games.

Upcoming event dates were shared:

- District Art Show from 4/27/26 - 5/7/26
- SAT scores will be released on 4/30/26
- UConn Chemistry Field Trip on 4/30/26
- NHS Blood Drive on 5/1/26 from 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- Teacher Appreciation Week starting 5/4/26
- NGSS Test beginning on 5/7/26
- Junior Class Car Wash on 5/9/26 from 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. at SHS
- Celebration of the Arts evening event on 5/13/26
- Fantastic Festival Competition on 5/15/26 and 5/16/26
- AP Exams from 5/6/26 - 5/14/26
- Senior Awards on 5/27/26
- Prom on 5/28/26
- Senior Outing on 6/1/26
- Capstone Presentation on 6/2/26
- Graduation on 6/10/26
- Underclassmen exams begin on 6/11/26

Board Member Gina Olearczyk thanked Ms. Drammeh and Ms. Chen for their preparation and willingness to take time from their busy schedules to present to the Board.

Chair Briggs inquired how the Board can better support students. Ms. Drammeh thanked the Board for taking the time to listen to student feedback regarding food service classes. Ms. Chen requested adjustments to the biweekly advisory classes, noting that many students find the advisory blocks repetitive and believe they could be better used to build school community and improve students' communication skills.

4.3. Monthly Budget Report

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

Discussion: Ms. Stephanie Levin presented the budget report. At the last meeting in March, there was a balance of approximately \$91,000. Since then, the balance increased to \$225,000 following the Board of Selectmen approval of payments at the 4/16/26 meeting. The remaining town-side balance is now just over \$54,000. Ms. Levin submitted invoices totaling \$52,583. These invoices are expected to be approved at the next Board of Selectmen meeting on 5/7/26.

A deposit of around \$60,000 from the excess cost grant is expected in May. Additional bills will be submitted from mid-May through the end of June.

At the Board of Finance meeting on 4/7/26, the district agreed to use funds that would otherwise have remained as excess operating budget funds to help pay for several projects, including:

- Phase 2 of the SHS Library project
- Replacement of the gym divider with a curtain
- More robust climate survey software
- A kitchen audit to develop a preventative maintenance schedule for aging equipment
- Implementation of a new maintenance work-order system
- Locker repairs at MBA

Additional projects are under review for approval.

A new work-order system is expected to be implemented for the Maintenance Department. The previous system, Arbiter, was primarily designed for athletics and included a work-order component, but it was not built specifically for maintenance needs. The new system is expected to be more user-friendly and better aligned with department operations.

Board Member Ed DePeau inquired whether all students use lockers. Ms. Levin explained that all students have the option to use a locker, but some need to be repaired or replaced. The estimated cost for the locker project is approximately \$10,000.

Chair Briggs inquired about a credit card charge in the monthly report. Ms. Levin explained that it was a Business Office credit card charge used when a purchase order could not be used.

5. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve Consent Agenda. This motion, made by Ed DePeau and seconded by Shane Manning, Carried. **Yea: 7, Nay: 0, Absent: 2 (JT Galloway, Kim Radziewicz)**

6.1. Warrant of April 13, 2026

Rationale: The Board to review and consent to the warrant of April 13, 2026

6.2. Warrant of April 27, 2026

Rationale: The Board to review and consent to the warrant of April 27, 2026.

6.3. Resignation

Rationale: Stacie Deveau, SHS Special Education Teacher, will be resigning effective at the end of the school year after four years of service with SPS.

6.4. Leave of Absence

Rationale: Charles Lewis, 6th Grade Science Teacher, is requesting a leave of absence through June 26, 2026.

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.1. 2nd Posting to Modification of Existing SHS Course - Explorations in Algebra I

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the modifications of the existing SHS course, Explorations in Algebra I.

Motion to approve the modifications to the Algebra I course at SHS. This motion, made by Gina Olearczyk and seconded by Ed DePeau, Carried. **Yea: 7, Nay: 0, Absent: 2 (JT Galloway, Kim Radziewicz)**

Discussion: Historically, Algebra I was offered for some students over two years. The revised course will be completed in one year and will focus on the essentials of Algebra. Students will learn the math skills needed prior to the SAT and have the opportunity to enroll in higher-level math courses.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Discussion: The Policy Committee is reviewing all Board policies that are more than ten years old, beginning with Board of Education policies. Board Member Anne Kirkpatrick welcomed any questions about the policy revisions.

8.1. 1st Posting DBS Code 0521 - Nondiscrimination

8.2. 1st Posting DBS Code 4118.5 - Equipment / Staff Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy

8.3. 1st Posting DBS Code 4152.6 - Personal Leaves

8.4. 1st Posting DBS Code 5113.13 - Students / Work-Study Student Employment/Work-Release

8.5. 1st Posting DBS Code 6141.32 - Curriculum: Computer Usage

8.6. 1st Posting DBS Code 9110 - Number of Members and Terms of Office

8.7. 1st Posting DBS Code 9120.2 - Officers / Term and Vacancy

8.8. 1st Posting DBS Code 9230 - Orientation of Board Members

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1. Curriculum

The Curriculum Committee met on 4/27/26 to discuss the Summer Reading List, which will be released in the next month or two. The Nutmeg List will be used for Summer Reading. The committee also reviewed PSAT, SBAC, and DIBELS data.

9.2. Policy (next meeting 5/11/26, 6 p.m.)

Rationale: The following policies were reviewed and unchanged by the Policy Committee on 3/23/26:

DBS Code 9010 - Limits of Authority

DBS Code 9110 - Number of Members and Term of Office Post

DBS Code 9133 - Temporary Committees

DBS Code 9312 - Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Bylaws

DBS Code 9313 - Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Administrative Regs

DBS Code 9314 - Suspension of Policies, Bylaws and Regulations

DBS Code 9321.3 - Special Meetings

Discussion: The next meeting will be held on 5/11/26 at 6 p.m.

9.3. Planning/Finance

A town meeting will be held on 5/5/26 at 7 p.m. A virtual meeting will likely be held the week of 5/4/26 to discuss budget transfers.

9.4. Salary & Negotiations

The committee will meet on 4/30/26 at 3 p.m. Mediation on the maintenance union contract is expected to be resolved by the end of the week. A meeting regarding the nurses' union contract will be held on 5/27/26 at 4:30 p.m.

9.5. Building

The Building Committee is awaiting documents from CES before a pre-construction review can be completed. The committee is also awaiting legal opinion due to changes to the law regarding the number of bidders for a project. At the time the project was approved, the law stated that no more than four bidders were allowed. The law now states that a minimum of three bidders is required. Legal opinion is being sought to ensure district compliance and to avoid risking state reimbursement for the project.

The SES boiler project was originally a three-phase CIP project. CIP has asked to shift this project to the HVAC project. The cost per boiler is approximately \$10,000 and 24 boilers need to be replaced. The cost estimate was provided two years ago. A new project manager has taken over due to difficulties reaching the previous project manager.

The next Building Committee meeting will be held on 5/5/26.

10. CIP/CREC/SEF

There is no CIP report. Board Member Sharon Goulet attended the CREC meeting on 4/22/26. Details regarding a new pathway for the 18–22-year-old transition program were shared. The new program is anticipated to pilot this summer and launch in 2027. The 60th anniversary of CREC is approaching. A celebration will be held on 5/20/26 at 11:30 a.m.

The annual SEF fundraiser will be held at Iron Fox Steakhouse on 5/2/26. Tickets are \$50 each. Over 100 tickets have been sold. SEF is a great funding source for the district, with \$1.3 million in endowments.

11. ADVANCE CALENDAR

A PTO meeting will be held on 5/13/26 at 5:30 p.m. The budget referendum will be held at Town Hall on 5/19/26. There will be a Memorial Day Celebration in the SHS Auditorium at 10 a.m. on 5/28/26. Capstone projects will be displayed in the SHS gym from 7:30 a.m.- 2 p.m. The last day of school for students is 6/17/26 and the last day for teachers is 6/18/26.

12. AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m. This motion, made by Shane Manning and seconded by Derek Zelek, Carried. **Yea: 7, Nay: 0, Absent: 2 (JT Galloway, Kim Radzewicz)**

Sharon Goulet, BOE Secretary Date
Jenna McDermott, BOE Recording Secretary