

Mayor Chris Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Agawam Junior High School Auditorium.

Roll Call of Attendance Present: 7; Absent: 0

Citizen's Speak Time: - No one from the public came forward to address the Committee.

HighLights on Education: Presentation of New Staff

Introduction of New Teachers - The Mayor turned this over to Superintendent Sheila Martin.

Superintendent Martin - Tonight is one of our favorite highlights. Thank you again for choosing Agawam, we are happy to have you. She then introduced principals one at a time. The principals came up to the podium and introduced their new staff member that was able to attend tonight. The staff member at that point told us a little about themselves. For the staff members that could not attend tonight, the principal read a little blurb about them.

Clark - Principal Mitch Taylor introduced Austin Sabadosa. Amanda Deseault, Jamie Trase and Lauren Rinaldi could not attend tonight but Principal Taylor read a little about them.

- ***Austin Sabadosa*** - Special Education Teacher - Intensive support classroom. I grew up and still live in Agawam. I graduated in 2017 - started as a building substitute teacher and paraprofessional at Clark. I am grateful to become a bigger part of the Clark community.
- ***Amanda Deseault*** - Grade 1 Teacher - Unable to attend - Received her Master's in June 2025 from BayPath University. As part of her practicum she worked in a Grade 2 classroom. She started her career in a Grade 1 classroom in Belchertown.
- ***Jamie Trase*** - Grade 3 Teacher - Unable to attend - Always enjoyed working with children. I had experience working as a paraprofessional. Earned her Bachelors degree from Springfield College and is currently working on her Master degree there too.
- ***Lauren Rinaldi*** - Grade 1 Teacher - Graduated in 2015 from AHS and was a student at James Clark. Very excited to be teaching in the school that she went to and is currently teaching in the same 1st grade classroom that she attended too.

Phelps - Principal Stephanie Gendron introduced 3 of her new teachers who were unable to attend this evening.

- ***Lindsay Canuel*** - Special Education Teacher (Connections Program) - Unable to attend - Excited to be joining the team at Phelps. She previously worked in West Springfield. Can't imagine doing anything else. She was also a student at Clark
- ***Rachel Sills*** - K-4 Science Teacher - Unable to attend - Principal Gendron thanked the School Committee for the funding for all of the elementary schools to have their own science teachers. Rachel was an Agawam graduate and she worked in Chicopee for 1 year. She is excited to get back to Agawam.
- ***Brittany Alverio*** - Grade 1 Teacher - Unable to attend - She graduated from Springfield College. Began her career in Springfield in Kindergarten for 5 years. She took some time off to raise her boys. Happy to be back teaching again.

Sapelli - Principal Stephanie Harris introduced Julie Gagnon and Elizabeth Bajek.

- **Julie Gagnon** - Grade 1 Teacher - Principal Harris said that being a 1st grade teacher is very challenging - a lot is happening in the classroom. It takes a special person to do that job and Julie is such a natural in 1st grade. Julie had a background in elementary school and she recently taught at Gateway.
- **Elizabeth Bajek** - Lead Teacher - Principal Harris thanked the School Committee for funding this position, it is such an important role at the elementary level. My new lead teacher has hit the ground running. Beth expressed how happy she is to be at Sapelli. Stephanie has said a lot of nice things about me, but I can't say enough about her. I have 20 plus years of teaching in Springfield. I am happy to be in Agawam.
- **Janine DiCarlo** - Art Teacher Phelps & Sapelli - Unable to attend - She graduated from UMass in 2025. She has been drawing since she was 9 years old. This is her first year teaching.

Granger - Principal Alyse Roy introduced Elizabeth Niemiec who was unable to attend tonight.

- Elizabeth Niemiec - Special Education Teacher - Intensive Support - Program - Unable to attend - Elizabeth graduated from Westfield State. She previously was a paraprofessional at Phelps. We love having her at Granger.

Doering - Principal Dom Costanzi - Thank you for your support - hiring staff is one of the most important things that I do in my role as Principal. Principal Costanzi introduced Peter Lantaing, Molly Clement and Vanessa Vigna.

- **Peter Lantaing** - Assistant Principal - Grateful for the opportunity to be here. This is my 25th year in public education. I taught English for 19 years, 17 of those years were in Belchertown. I spent the last 4 years in West Springfield as an Assistant Principal in the Middle School. It has been a great start to the school year. It is great to see the level of support you show to our students and staff.
- **Molly Clement** - Special Education Teacher - Intensive Support Teacher - Graduated from Westfield State - hopefully I will get my master degree soon. My mom was a teacher and I loved to go to her classroom. I was recently working in Holyoke. It is an absolute pleasure to be a part of Agawam Public Schools.
- **Vanessa Vigna** - Grade 5 Teacher (ELA/Social Studies) - I have been teaching for 20 years. I am really happy to be here. Literacy is my love language. I recently came from Smith School - 6th grade students. Overjoyed to be back in public education.

Junior High - Principal Norm Robbins introduced 5 new staff members but only 2 were able to attend tonight. Thank you to our School Committee, Mayor Johnson, Superintendent Martin, Assistant Superintendent Salomao and Mr. Clickstein for all of their support.

- **Jayonna Montigny** - JH Math Teacher (7%) - Currently teaching 7th grade math. Before I began working at the Junior High, I did my practicum at Doering and I fell in love with the school. They didn't have a permanent teaching position at the time so I was the permanent sub at Doering until a long term substitute position at JH opened up last year. Now I have a permanent position at the Junior High and I love working here.
- **Carol Callahan** - Science Teacher (7%) - I come here in my 10th year of teaching - 5 have been in Chicopee and 5 have been in Southwick. I heard from 3 people that I had to apply for a position in Agawam. I am so grateful for the opportunity and so happy that I am working for this district.
- **Jake Leahy** - Health Teacher (7%) - unable attend. This is his first year teaching in Agawam. He has worked in Longmeadow and Wilbraham as well. He went to Springfield College and majored in Applied Exercise Science.
- **Angelina Buoniconti** - Literacy Studies Teacher (7%) - unable to attend - She brings 14 year experience - 7 of those years were at Bellamy School in Chicopee. She has a masters from UMASS and she is an Agawam resident.
- **David Harms** - Junior High - Stem Teacher - Unable to attend. Originally from South Dakota. He worked in law enforcement so he says that lunch duty at Junior High is a cake walk. He also taught high school biology in Southwick.

High School - Principal Jim Blain introduced Carly James and Lillie Hellyer.

- *Carly James* - English Teacher - Principal Blain explained that Carly came from Westfield State University. Tim Karetka met her at a career fair and said that we need to hire her. Carly said that she teaches 10th and 11th grade English. She received her Bachelors in English this year. She previously worked as a substitute teacher and she did her student teaching in Chicopee. She expressed that she is lucky to be here in Agawam.
- *Lillie Hellyer* - Business Teacher - Principal Blain said that Lillie did a long term substitute teaching position at his wife's school. They had no current Business teacher openings and when my wife knew that we had one, she said that Lillie would be a great hire. Lillie said that she graduated from East Longmeadow and attended Assumption University. She is teaching a variety of Business courses this year. She received a Business Management Degree from Assumption with a minor in Marketing. She enjoyed working in East Longmeadow last year.

Special Services - Erin Walsh introduced

- Michelle Costanzi - Occupational Therapist - Michelle is currently working at Sapelli School and Sapelli ECC - primary working with the preK & K students. She has been an OT for 11 years and has been at Early Intervention. Excited to bring her experience from Early Intervention to our district.
- Lianna Baez - Inclusion Facilitator - Working at Sapelli and Clark - I came with 15 years of experience from the Springfield public schools. She earned her Bachelors Degree from Westfield State. She explained what inclusion really means and that it was very near and dear to her heart.
- Karen Hall - Educational Team Facilitator (ETF) - unable to be here tonight. Was previously an Assistant principal working in Springfield. Worked in both Special Education and General Ed.

Questions/Discussions:

Mayor Johnson- On behalf of the entire school community - thank you for choosing Agawam.

Superintendent Notes:

A sincere thank you to all the new staff members who joined us tonight to introduce themselves. We truly value your time and appreciate you spending part of your evening with us. While a great group was able to attend, a few couldn't make it. In total, we are thrilled to welcome 21 new teachers and 18 new paraprofessionals to our dedicated team this year!

Agawam Day at the Big E will be tomorrow Wednesday, September 30th. Students ages 6 to 18 years old will receive a free voucher to attend the Big E on Agawam day. The free vouchers will not be given to students until the end of the school day and are not valid until after 2:00pm on September 30th.

All schools will be conducting instructional learning walks again this year. These learning walks, or "instructional rounds" directly support the district's strategic priorities by creating a structured, collaborative process for observing teaching and learning, analyzing evidence, and identifying trends. By visiting classrooms with a lens on the student experience, educators gather insights that strengthen a sense of belonging, such as understanding how students are welcomed, and how instruction promotes access and agency for students. In addition, the collaborative nature of rounds enhances communication, teamwork, and appreciation for diverse perspectives by bringing educators together to analyze classroom evidence and refine district-wide practices. Finally, instructional rounds provide data that help schools adjust instructional approaches and design meaningful, student-driven learning experiences.

There will be no school on Monday, October 12th in observance of Columbus Day.

Student Advisory Committee Representative Update: - Devin Soucy

- **Early Childhood Center** - Back-to-School Night will be held at ECC Sapelli on October 7th from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm and at ECC Perry Lane on October 8th from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The Parent Volunteer Group will also host a Fall Playdate on October 15th from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm at Perry Lane, giving families an opportunity to connect, learn about local resources, and participate in activities.
- **Granger** - Students are continuing to settle into their routines, and families had the opportunity to visit classrooms during Back-to-School Night. Teachers are reviewing beginning-of-year assessment results to identify areas where students may need additional support. Granger will also hold its PBIS Kickoff Assembly on October 2nd, focusing on respect for themselves, others, learning, and the school. The other elementary schools will also be having their PBIS kickoff on October 2nd.
- **Clark** - The Harvest Festival and evening Book Fair will be held on October 7th from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. School Pictures will be held on October 20th, followed by Trunk or Treat on October 29th from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm.
- **Phelps** - Back-to-School Night was a success, with families visiting classrooms, learning more about the curriculum, and receiving resources for reading and math support. This week is the annual PBIS Spirit Week for them leading up to PBIS kickoff.
- **Sapelli** - The school has been named a DESE School of Recognition for the second time in the last three years. The school made significant progress toward its accountability targets, particularly among student subgroups. Staff and students will be recognized with a luncheon and extra recess, respectively.
- **Doering** - The Scholastic Book Fair will run from October 5th through October 9th. This will also run through the elementary schools and the ECC along the same dates.
- **Junior High** - Back-to-School Night had a great turnout. The first social night will be held on October 16th from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, featuring gym activities, video gaming, karaoke, snacks, and drinks. Several clubs will also begin this month, including Intramural Sports, Anime, Conservation, Community, ESports, and Chess.
- **High School** - Students recently participated in a Club Fair in the library, where they had the opportunity to learn more about available clubs and groups to join. The Tri-M Honor Society Induction will be held on October 7th, followed by Senior Sunrise on October 13th at 5:30 am.

Unfinished Business:

- **SCR 26-55** Acceptance of Gift/Donation from the Family of Raymond C. Francis in the amount of \$1,574.00.
 - On a motion made by *AJ Christopher* and seconded by *Dawn DeMatteo* the committee via roll call, voted for the acceptance of the Gift/Donation from the Family of Raymond C. Francis in the amount of \$1,574.00.
 - **Vote 7 to 0**

- **SCR 26-56** Acceptance of Gift/Donation from the Agawam XC Booster Club in the amount of \$500.00.
 - On a motion made by *AJ Christopher* and seconded by *Shelley Reed & Dawn DeMatteo* the committee via roll call, voted for the acceptance of the Gift/Donation from the Agawam XC Booster Club in the amount of \$500.00.
 - **Vote 7 to 0**

- **SCR 26-57** Acceptance of Gift/Donation from the Agawam High School Golf Booster Club in the amount of \$6,000.00.
 - On a motion made by *Dawn DeMatteo* and seconded by *Michael Perry* the committee via roll call, voted for the acceptance of the Gift/Donation from the Agawam High School Golf Booster Club in the amount of \$6,000.00.
 - **Vote 7 to 0**

- **SCR 26-58** - Acceptance of Gift/Donation from the Agawam Girls Volleyball Booster Club in the amount of \$1,050.00.
 - On a motion made by *Michael Perry* and seconded by *Shelley Reed* the committee via roll call, voted for the acceptance of the Gift/Donation from the Agawam Girls Volleyball Booster Club in the amount of \$1,050.00.
 - *Mike Perry* - Thank you to the 3 booster clubs for your donations to supplement the costs. We don't have player fees and I know that this is a lot of work.
 - **Vote 7 to 0**

- **SCR 26-59** Approval of the Robert Bruno Memorial Scholarship.
 - On a motion made by *Wendy Rua* and seconded by *AJ Christopher* the committee via roll call, voted for the acceptance of the Approval of the Robert Bruno Memorial Scholarship.
 - **Vote 7 to 0**

- **SCR-26-60** Approval of the Agawam Junior High School 2027 Field Trip to Washington, DC.
 - On a motion made by *Shelley Reed* and seconded by *Michael Perry* the committee via roll call, voted for the acceptance of the Approval of the Agawam Junior High School 2027 Field Trip to Washington, DC.
 - **Vote 7 to 0**

- **SCR 26-61** - Approval of the revised Network Support Technician Job Description.
 - On a motion made by *Michael Perry* and seconded by *Wendy Rua* the committee via roll call, voted for the acceptance of the Approval of the revised Network Support Technician Job Description
 - **Vote 7 to 0**

Business Meeting:

- **Routine Matters**
 - Approval of Minutes - On a motion made by *Shelley Reed* and seconded by *Wendy Rua* the committee via roll call, voted to approve the **September 15, 2026**, regular meeting minutes.
 - **Vote : 7 to 0**

- **Warrants/Transfers**

- On a motion made by *AJ Christopher* and seconded by *Shelley Reed*, the committee via roll call, voted to approve the following warrants as read:

■ **Vote : 7 to 0 absent**

- **SW 27- 18** **\$ 158,550.04**
- **SW 27-19** **\$45,947.31**
- **SW 27-20** **\$134,751.76**
- **SW 27-21** **\$18,740.04**
- **PW-27-03** **\$3,555,629.74**

● **Reports - Stephen Woishnis - Technology Update**

- 6,000 + Devices - Including Windows, Chromebooks, Apple Ipads and everything that is used by staff, teachers, students and contractors.
- 5,425 Tickets - Number of tickets solved over the past calendar year by the Technology Department.
- District 1:1 Program - 1 Device for every student and staff in the district. Grades PreK all the way past High School.
- 1 New School - Working on setting up the new high school for success and modern technology. Updating the rest of the district to match.
- Filter & Firewall - Went through a security audit of our current firewall. Deployed new content filter in the district. Added classroom filter/monitor tools for teachers.
- SSO/MFA Implementation - Rolled out ClassLink to improve MFA and SSO initiatives. All staff on MFA by end of the school year.
- Reporting - State Reporting is handled by the IT department. All deadlines have been met. Procedure and training have been updated with new requirements.
- 15 Team members - 7 stipend position , 7 full time staff and 1 Director supporting a district and community of thousands.

Questions/Discussion

- *Shelley Reed* - With a staff of 15 - that is amazing that you can complete all of this. Please extend our appreciation to your staff for all that they do.
- *AJ Christopher* - The firewall - Was there anything that was uncovered?
 - *Stephen Woicik*- No, we were good.
- *AJ Christopher* - And you had the funds for this audit.
 - *Stephen Woicik* - Yes, that is what we use E-rate for.
- Mayor Johnson - Stephen has been very instrumental with helping with the new high school. The IT offices will be in the new the community wing of the new high school.

Mayor Johnson - New High School Update

- Mayor Johnson had a slide presentation of pictures of the new high school. The first slide showed an aerial view the entire campus.
- In January 2027 when the new community wing is supposed to open, there will be no access to the new auditorium which will still be under construction. The old auditorium will still be used during this time frame.
- There will be a main entrance from the plaza open to get to the community wing. There will be computer screens and the 2nd floor new gym will be open.
- The Cafe just finish - the floor was just completed. The second floor of the cafe is open to look down on the main cafe. There will be a large Agawam High sign hanging on the second floor near the stairs leading up to the second floor of the cafe.

- The main gym will have the same color pads on the walls - orange and brown. The new bleachers will be brown because the orange colors are so different and hard to match. Going to go with banner dates on the new banners.
- In the courtyard, the glass area will be looking into the gym. The gym through the cafe to the offices of the old school will be the next to be demolished. The 2nd phase should be done September 2028 which included the archway of the new ECC.
- Last phase will be the demolition of the other parts of the building and rebuilding the field and the 2nd field containing the artificial turf.
- The last few slides were elevation drawings of the new school - north elevation, south elevation and west elevation.

Questions & Discussion - No questions

Subcommittee Updates

AJ Christopher - LPVEC update - Representatives from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education (EOE) will present the LPVEC with a check for the **\$3.7 million expansion grant** that they will receive from the state. This grant will fund a 6,000-square-foot addition to the back of the Brush Hill building for their new electrical program.

New Business

- **SCR 26-62** - Approval of the Student Council as an Extracurricular activity at the Roberta G. Doering School. Will move to unfinished business at the next meeting.
 - **SCR 26-63** - Approval to change the Graduation Date for Agawam High Class of 2027 to Sunday, June 6, 2027 at 1:00pm at Symphony Hall.
 - On a motion made by *Shelley Reed* and seconded by *AJ Christopher* to suspend the rules to vote on SCR 26-63.
 - **Vote 7 to 0**
 - On a motion made by *AJ Christopher* and seconded by *Shelley Reed* the committee via roll call, voted for the approval to change the Graduation Date for Agawam High Class of 2027 to Sunday, June 6, 2027 at 1:00pm at Symphony Hall. The graduation ceremony will remain as previously voted on Saturday, June 12, 2027 at 1:00 pm at Symphony Hall.
- Discussion**
- *Shelley Reed* - I don't agree with moving this. If they move this to June 6, 2026, I am going to vote no.
 - *Michael Perry* - I agree that it would be nice to have graduation sooner, but a lot of parents have made arrangements for graduation based on the original date voted on of Saturday, June 12th.
- **Vote 0 to 7 - DENIED**
- **SCR 26-64** - Approval of the Speech & Debate Club as an Extracurricular activity at the High School. Will move to unfinished business at the next meeting.

All will move to unfinished business except SCR 26-63 which was denied.

Policy Review

- a. **Policy ACL** - Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers Engaged in Civil Law Enforcement (Protect Act) - third reading

On a motion made by *AJ Christopher* and seconded by *Wendy Rua*, the committee via roll call, will approve the third reading of Policy ACL.

Mike Perry - I have issues with this but I know that this is a law that we are forced to create a policy on. I have done a lot of research on this. There have been many law enforcements coming to the schools. This makes the schools less safe. It puts our staff and students in an unsafe place. I am going to vote no on this.

Shelley Reed - I am going to vote with Mr. Perry. This is very political.

Mayor Johnson - Stepping away as the chair, I want to make this clear this is civil law enforcement and not criminal law enforcement

Vote 2 to 5 - No on policy ACL

Any Other Items That May Legally come before the Committee

Heather Zielenski - Welcome to all of the new educators. So nice to see how excited they are to be here. See everyone at the Big E tomorrow!

Wendy Rua - Happy Agawam Day! I was at the Back to School night at the high school - it was extraordinarily well done - kudos to the teachers for coming up with something different. Good job!

Michael Perry - I second that - Welcome to all of the new teachers. Looking forward to the Speech Debate Club.

Shelley Reed - Welcome to all of the new teachers.

Dawn DeMatteo - Ditto

AJ Christopher - nothing

Mayor Johnson - nothing

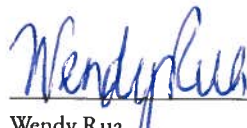
Devin Soucy - So excited to be here. Looking forward to the Speech and Debate club.

The Chair moved to adjourn the meeting on a motion made by *Wendy Rua* and seconded by *Shelley Reed* without a vote "All those in favour say yea" and "All those opposed say nay.

Vote: Yea 7 to 0 absent.

The meeting concluded at - 8:04 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Collen DeGeorge
Executive Assistant to the School Committee



Wendy Rua
Committee Secretary