APPROVED ON APRIL 15, 2026

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SOUTH BURLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

Executive Session at 5:00 pm

Regular Session at 6:00 pm

South Burlington School District Administrative Office

577 Dorset Street, South Burlington, VT

REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT
Seamus Abshere, Laura Williams, Dan Boyer, Emilee Hoffman, Michelle Boyer, Elissa Galvez

ADMINISTRATION/STAFF
Dr. Joe Clark

GUESTS

Mick Leddy, District Counsel

Call Regular meeting to order
Seamus Abshere called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
Seamus Abshere called for a motion to enter executive session at 5:03 pm for Employment of Public Officer, Receive Legal Counsel, Labor Negotiations and added that it would be significantly disadvantageous to the district not to do so in executive session.

Michelle Boyer made the motion and Laura Williams seconded. The motion passes.

Emilee joined at 5:08 pm

Training/Labor Negotiations

IN: 5:01 pm

OUT: 6:01 pm

Michelle Boyer moved to adjourn the executive session at 6:01 pm. Laura Williams seconded. All were in favor; the executive session is adjourned at 6:01 pm

REGULAR MEETING

Present

Seamus Abshere, Laura Williams, Dan Boyer, Michelle Boyer, Emilee Hoffman, Elissa Galvez, Ally Leduc, Momin Waqar

Administration/Staff

Dr. Joe Clark, Monica Desrochers, Jean Marie Clark, Daisy Brayton, Nick Bocchino

Guests

2 in person

5 online

Call to Order

Chair Seamus Abshere called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA
There were no announcements.

Comments and Questions
No comments from the public.

Student Representative Report
Ally Leduc and Momin Waqar presented the following information:

- Student teacher conferences will be held this Thursday and Friday, April 2nd and 3rd.
- Some students at the high school will be completing the CEL Biliteracy test this Thursday and Friday.
- Other students will also be taking the VTCAP exam at the high school this week.
- On April 11 from 9 am to 1 pm in the Gertrude Chamberlain School small parking lot, Chamberlin will be hosting a fun bike rodeo.

Agenda Adjustments
The board will swap the order of the Ends policy consultant presentation and the Audit presentation.

Recruiting a new student representative (Possible Action)
The Board will start the process of finding a new student representative for next year

Important dates:

- April 6: Post an announcement slideshow and send out a link to the application
- May 4: Application due.
- Week of May 18th: Hold interviews and decide the new representative.
- June 3rd: New representative's first board meeting.
- June 17: Current representatives last meeting.

The board needs to decide on two members to be involved in the process.Elssa Galvez and Jennifer Lawrence will be working directly with the student representatives. Emilee Hoffman and Michelle Boyer are available as extra support.

Presentation of FY 2025 South Burlington School District Audit- John Boulay, RHR Smith & Company
John Belay from RHR Smith and Company presented the fiscal year 2025 South Burlington School District audit. The presentation will cover the opinion, major statements in the full audit report, the general fund, enterprise funds, and comments on the management letter. The audit period is from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. The district received an unmodified opinion, which is the highest opinion a district can receive

Ends Policy Consultant Presentation

The Ends Policy Committee recommended involving a consultant to ensure the policy is actionable and inline with current standards.

Anne Davidson, consultant provided an overview of the services she could provide including:

- The board will still write the policy, with a consultant's help.
- The goal is to have strong recommendations for a revised Ends policy by June.
- Key considerations for Revision include
    - align with best practices
    - serve the desires and engagement of South Burlington stakeholders
    - address the outdated nature of the current policy
    - establish a strong link between action-oriented policy statements and monitoring
    - the policy should be measurable and actionable.
- Data Collection and Analysis will be incorporated. This will include:
    - focus group interviews will be combined with transcripts/notes from open forum meetings
    - a community survey will be used to confirm draft recommendations and address unresolved questions
    - analysis of collected data will lead to a report with key findings and recommendations, providing a basis for decision-making.
    - stakeholder input will be taken seriously, but the school board has the final decisionmaking power.

Anne Davidson reviewed her team members and their roles
Jessica Drizin - Research manager with experience in user experience research, focusing on trust-building and protocol development.

Christina Ilangakoon - Data and analysis expert/statistician who will support the project in the background.

Anne Davidson - Has experience in program evaluation, policy development, analysis, accountability, and assessment.

The board thanked Anne Davidson for her presentation.

Common Roots with Carol McQuillen
Carol McQuillen provided an overview of the Farm to School program throughout the district including:

- The middle school has the "Farm to Go" program where student chefs create meals to take home to their families.
- 15,500 meals have been made for families through this program.

The board took a five-minute break at 7:25 pm until 7:30 pm.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Early Separation Program (ESP)

- The election window closes on Friday, April 3rd.
- Participants have a seven-day revocation period through Thursday, April 10th. After April 10th, elections become irrevocable.
- As of the most recent report, 21 employees have opted into the ESP: 11 teachers, 6 classified staff, and 4 administrators.
- The board needs to decide on April 15th whether to proceed with the program based on the final election results and projected savings.

School Foundation

Dr. Clark said the school foundation has been relatively dormant; Patrick Burke and Joanne Abate are working to revitalize it.

- The goal is to give out scholarships to graduating seniors and mini-grants to teachers.
- Dr. Clark is looking to recruit new members to the board and is excited about the interest, with 16 people expressing interest after the announcement.
- Dr. Clark would like a board member or two to be liaisons to the group.

Discussion Items

General discussion of updating Ends Policy and the importance of community involvement since they are the owners.

- The goal is to have a first draft of a new Ends policy by July 8th.
- There are plans for four community forums: April 15th, May 6th, May 20th, and June 3rd.
- The board needs to recruit community members for both the community forums and focus groups.
- There was a discussion about the number and composition of focus groups, with a suggestion to have five or more in-person focus groups. The community forums are more informal, while the focus groups are more intentional and focused on getting a fuller representation.

Communication and social media guidelines

- The school board received two community emails about board members being on social media. There was a revision of the guidelines in 2020 that was never approved. The board went over the revision
- Discussion around social media about sharing emails to communicate more personal opinions.
- Monica Desrochers shared a helpful guideline that aligns with the Vermont School Board Association.
- Posts made on an individual member level do not speak for the board.

ACTION ITEMS

Authorize Board Chair to hire Ends Policy consultant

The board discusses hiring an Ends policy consultant, considering options like not hiring anyone, delaying the decision, or choosing from different candidates.

Seamus Abshere moved that the Board authorize the Ends Policy Committee to hire a consultant up to $22,000, after making a good faith offer to find an adequate fit. Dan Boyer moved and Laura Wiliams seconded. No public comment was received on the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Daisy Brayton, the Director of HR, asked how the $22,000 limit was determined. Seamus Abshere said the amount was based on previous discussions and a proposal with options for virtual or in-person focus groups.

There was no further discussion. All members were in favour and the motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA& PLANNING (Policy 4.3.3)

Approve minutes of March 18, 2026

Approve Account Payables (AP) § Value > $50K: Orders #:

- 1430 for $217,261.48
- 1431 for $3,591.01
- 1432 for $16,680.19
- 1433 for $5,383.98
- 1434 for $1,537.00
- 1435 for $119.86
- 1436 for $555,640.71
- 1437 for $225.00
- 1438 for $63,755.57

- 1439 for $1,010.63

AP Payroll Warrant #19

Approve AP Voucher Checks to Burlington School District in the amount of $118,538.76 and Vermont Mechanical Inc. in the amount of $115,564.48 - Seamus Abshere called for a motion to approve the check to Vermont Mechanical and Burlington School District. Laura William moved and Dan Boyer seconded. No further discussion. The motion passes.

Bids - Boiler Replacement at Orchard School
Seamus Abshere called for a motion to allow for a bid recommendation for the Orchard School boiler. Laura William moved and Dan Boyer seconded. No further discussion. The motion passes.

Snow Removal Equipment
Seamus Abshere called for a motion to approve the bid recommendation for snow removal equipment. Laura William moved. Elissa Galvez seconded. No further discussion. The motion passes.

Hire for 2026-2027 school year
- Becky Fontana, 1.0 FTE Elementary Teacher at Rick Marcotte Central School.

Resignation/Retirement
- Marguerite Adams, 1.0 FTE Elementary Teacher at Orchard School
- Elizabeth Coleman, 1.0 FTE Art Teacher at FHT Middle School

Set agenda for April 15, 2026 regular meeting
Review future agenda items / parking lot

ADJOURNMENT

Seamus Abshere called for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Laura Williams and Elissa seconded. The motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Seamus Abshere, Chair

Laura Williams, Clerk