

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SOUTH BURLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD

Wednesday, February 4, 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 Abshire, Dan Boyer, Michelle Boyer, Emilee Hoffman, Austin Smith

ADMINISTRATION/STAFF

Dr. Joe Clark

GUESTS

None

Call Regular meeting to order

Seamus Abshire called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Seamus Abshire called for a motion to enter executive session at 5:16 pm to discuss Employment of a Public Officer and to receive confidential attorney client communications for the purpose of providing legal services to the board and added that it would be significantly disadvantageous to the district not to do so in executive session. Dan Boyer moved, and Austin Smith seconded. The motion passes.

The votes to move into executive session were as follows:

Austin: Aye

Dan: Aye

Emilee: Aye

Michelle: Aye

Seamus: Aye

Jennifer: Not present

Laura: Not present

Employment of a Public Officer and to receive confidential attorney client communications for the purpose of providing legal services to the board

IN: 5:23 pm

OUT: 5:48 pm

No Action

Michelle Boyer moved to adjourn the executive session at 5:48 pm. Austin Smith seconded. All were in favor, and the executive session was adjourned at 5:48 pm.

REGULAR MEETING**Present**

Seamus Abshire, Dan Boyer, Emilee Hoffman, Michelle Boyer, Austin Smith, Ally Leduc, Momin Waqar

Administration/Staff

Dr. Joe Clark, Nicole Carter, Monica Desrochers, Jean Marie Clark, Patrick Burke, Daisy Brayton, Nick Bocchino

Guests

In person: 4

Online: 12

Call to Order

Chair Seamus Abshire called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There will be a vacancy on the school board after town meeting day unless there's a write-in candidate who gets at least 30 votes.

Amendments to the Agenda

A motion was made by Seamus Abshire to change the agenda to move the discussion of the Williston right of way request to be placed after student representative report.

Comments and Questions

Public comment from Lars Gold, high school teacher and executive board member to the union, spoke about an immigration hearing they attended today. They urged the Board to consider the human variables when making decisions.

Student Representative Report

Ally Leduc and Momin Waqar presented the following information:

- Over the next week students interested in the CTE programs will be going on visits to Essex and Burlington.
- Elementary school students will be going on field trips to watch UVM women's basketball team.
- Lucy Myer, spokesperson for UNICEF USA, will be speaking at all elementary schools, and the middle school as well, about acceptance, inclusion and support.
- Sweet Hearts and Heroes a youth leadership organization, visited the high school for a freshman and sophomore assembly.
- Emily Hoffman inquired about middle school Penguin Plunge team and dates. More information to come.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Williston Road Right of Way Request

Joe Clark introduced the topic and said the city has safety concerns with Williston Road, including narrow sidewalks.

Jessie Baker, city manager, and Alana Blanchard, community development director, presented the Williston Road Streetscape Improvement Project. Baker said the city is requesting that the school district consider donating an easement and approve a warranty deed for a small segment of Williston Road. The city also requests that the school board find that this project will be beneficial to the district and the safety of students and parents.

Baker said the Williston Road Streetscape is a key component of improvements to create an entrance to City Center and enable walkable and bikeable growth. The project aims to improve walkability on Williston Road, which has been a concern for some time. The initial plan was to have sidewalks on both sides of Williston Road, but the focus is now on the south side, which is also the school side.

The project is currently in the right-of-way acquisition stage, with construction expected to take one season. The project includes a separated bicycle path and sidewalk, but there have been modifications to the original plan.

Lissa McDonald shared her support for the project and requested that for the Board to ask for the construction to start during the summer season so as to not affect community members accessibility. A gate would be included for student accessibility. Superintendent Clark supports the construction.

Board will discuss this again on February 18.

ACTION ITEMS

Monitoring Report 2.10 Academic Proficiency

The policy states that the Superintendent shall not allow the district be without written curricula alignment. Vermont Standards and board ends policies that are coordinated across all grade levels of schools.

The superintendent should review the curriculum periodically, considering student performance, learning opportunity data, new research, and updated content knowledge. Compliance is demonstrated when written curriculum exists for all required content areas and grade levels, is current, and is accessible to staff in a consistent format.

Nicole Carter presented on the monitoring report and shared we are out of compliance on many of the items and spoke about the district's plans to come into compliance. The three-phase strategic action plan includes:

- Phase 1: Stabilization (immediate/Summer)
 - Reset expectations & freeze loose spending

- Phase 2: Alignment (Year 1)
 - Build the framework and close gaps
- Phase 3: Accountability (Year 2)
 - Ensure fidelity and measure impact

The board reviewed the monitoring report, asked several questions, and had a robust discussion. Board members provided individual evaluations of the monitoring report.

Seamus Abshire called for a motion to approve the Monitoring Report 2.10 – Curriculum Development and Review. Michelle Boyer moved and Austin Smith seconds. There were no public comments. The monitoring report was approved as presented.

The board took a three-minute break at 7:34 pm.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Monitoring Report 2.4 Financial Condition and Activities

Dr. Joe Clark introduced Jean Marie Clark, Director of Finance and Operations to present the monitoring report.

Jean Marie Clark said the Monitoring Policy shows were staying within our voter-approved budget. We are not exceeding our debt and are not borrowing from other areas. She added that the district is approaching compliance on operating reserves and accountability. We do not have an operating reserve, we have a capital reserve of \$680,000 for facilities work.

Joe Clark said the plan to come into compliance is cleaning things up, being more and more transparent, and having more written procedures, and communication so they have a backup for everything that they do.

Jean Marie said they will be working on a financial handbook to share with employees on how to create a purchase requisition as well as other financial processes and procedures.

Seamus Abshire called for a motion to monitor 2.4 Financial Conditions and Activities using the board evaluation provided. Dan Boyer moves and Austin Smith seconds. There was no public comment. All were in favor and the motion passes.

The board reviewed the monitoring report, asked several questions, and discussed. Board members provided individual evaluations of the monitoring report.

Seamus Abshire called for a motion to monitor 2.4 Financial Conditions and Activities using the board evaluation provided. Dan Boyer moves and Austin Smith seconds. There was no public comment. All were in favor and the motion passes.

How to Monitor 2.9—Communication and Support to the Board

Board members were asked to nominate board members for direct inspection. Seamus Abshire volunteered to work on this. Michelle Boyer was randomly selected to work with Seamus on direct inspection of Communication and Support to the board.

Policy E2 - Security Cameras (First Reading)

Dr. Clark said this is a first reading, resulting from changes to the executive limitation around cameras. The only change requested is in the final section on viewing requests. Seamus said there is an error in the current draft regarding superintendent permission for viewing video recordings. Dr. Clark will revise the policy to remove the requirement for superintendent permission for administrators or directors to view recordings. The board suggests adding a logging aspect to track who is viewing the recordings and for what reasons.

The security cameras policy will be brought back to the next board meeting for consideration.

FY 2027 Budget Communication Plan

Emily, Jen, and Laura are scheduled to meet with Momin and Ally next Thursday, February 12 at 7 pm to discuss budget communication. An update will be provided after the meeting.

Jean Marie shared past ads from The Other Paper with the committee. Joe Clark has worked on adding a Front Porch Forum account for the district. Jean Marie clarified that she wants the committee to submit an ad to the *Other Paper* by this Friday.

School District Redistricting

Abshire said Legislators are looking for clear expressions from school districts to help them vote on redistricting. Michelle Boyer said the district needs to be explicit in defining the terms of redistricting and the District's needs for consolidation. Abshire gave an overview on some of the things the district might be able to consolidate with other districts in the area including human resources and finance.

Emilee Hoffman asked to get more information before making any decisions on redistricting.

Ally Leduc, Student Representative, expressed there are student concerns around redistricting. She said clear communication from administration to the student body around the impacts is essential moving forward.

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT**Bus Transportation**

Dr. Clark spoke about school bus transportation. He said a student was recently denied bus access, prompting a discussion about transportation eligibility and procedures. He reviewed the following:

Who is eligible? Must live within a mile or more from the school

How do you register? Enroll in PowerSchool at the beginning of the year. If a family reports no, but their address and circumstances change, the family must call the schools administrative team to inform them of the change.

What do we not permit? Any students who are not listed on the drivers' route to board the bus.

Jean Marie commented on the Safe Routes to School Committee and said the City has done a wonderful job at ensuring streets are safe for families to walk to school.

Mark Gabel, school bus driver said the following:

- the buses are not safe due to being overcrowded,
- bus drivers were told if a parent gives permission for their child to ride the driver must allow them to enter. For example, a parent may invite a child over for a playdate, and that child then enters the bus making the bus even more crowded.

The administration will be working on new school bus policies and procedures.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes of January 14 and 21, 2026 – The board approved the minutes as presented.

Approve Account Payables (AP):

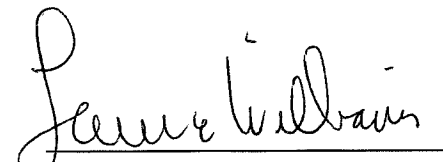
- 1339 for \$119,721.10
- 1347 for \$2,489.00
- 1348 for \$93,179.02
- 1349 for \$73,874.05
- 1350 for \$600.00
- 1351 for \$10,557.96

Agenda Planning – The board reviewed the agenda for the February 18, 2026. The team agrees to strike the topic of School District Redistricting from the February 18 agenda.

The board approved the consent agenda as presented.

ADJOURNMENT

Seamus Abshere called for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Emilee Hoffman moved and Dan Boyer seconded. The motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 8:59 pm.


Seamus Abshere, Chair
~~Austin Smith, Acting Clerk~~
Laura Williams
clerk