GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday August 12, 2026
Jon Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant St. Greenfield, MA 01301

I. **Call to Order 6:38pm**

II. **Roll Call: If members appear online, roll call voting must be used.**

Present: Ann Childs (AC); Jeffrey Diteman (JD); Mayor Ginny DeSorgher (GD); Melodie Goodwin (MG); Melissa McKenzie-Webb (MW).

Also present: Superintendent Carol Kruser (CK); Business Manager Andy Paquette (AP).

Absent: Stacey Sexton (SS); Elizabeth de Neeve (ED).

III. **Public Comment:** Members of the public may speak for up to three minutes as recognized by the Chairperson per Chapter 49 -Hybrid Ordinance, members of the public attending virtually or in person may comment by raising their hand and stating their name and address or precinct.

Jake Toomey: Parent, former educator, administrator, and long time public school advocate. Kindergarten assignment appeal under policy JCA for familial consistency, community ties, and our household logistics. We reviewed the policy, identified exemption criterion, and provided relevant documentation. Our appeal was denied under both the former and current superintendents sighting strict commitment to attendance zones in the name of equity.

True equity across the elementary schools does not exist. Real disparities exist. Four Corners is the only school with free onsite before care. Dogmatically enforcing neighborhood zones while such structural inequities exist is administrative rigidity. These neighborhood zones are fundamentally illogical. Families off Lyden Road are carved up into three different elementary schools. Bus routes cross unnecessarily wasting resources and creating hurdles for families.

For nearly fifteen years I have advocated for a single, unified elementary school in Greenfield; or at the very least an elementary campus with lower and upper schooling. It is economically efficient, streamlines resources, and is the only long term solution to district-wide inequity. Our interim policy should reflect a bridge to that future. While we wait for a single school to become a reality, we should use this transitional period to stop the bleeding of students to out of district options by granting sensible flexibility to families who make a valid case. Rebuffing families with rigid boundary enforcement while a single school solution is on the horizon achieves the opposite of its goal. It pushes invested families out of the public schools.

Because our appeal was denied, we made the heavy choice to enroll our child out of district. I urge this committee to introduce flexibility into policy JCA.

IV. **Reports of the Administration**

A. **Business Manager:** See submitted materials.

1. **Budget Update**
2. **Budget Reports Review**

MG: What are the salary estimates for paraprofessionals as a placeholder? Also Curriculum Directors in two places; instruction at $144K, and district wide at $500K.

AP: Step 7, $22.34/hr. Actual compensation commiserates with qualifications determined at hiring. Other titles are DESE categorizations; $144 is curriculum title for Assistant Superintendent. The other is Special Education Director and Assistants.

MG: Under High School there is Business and Finance Contracted Services. I thought that should be under the district and not under the high school.

AP: There isn't a Business and Finance under high school for FY27.

MG: I will send an email if I find it again. Other district wide administrators $120K?

AP: 504 coordinator FY26, not FY27.

GD: It appears that we have to Negotiate every 10 years with Comcast. We spend about $6,500 GCET annually. What do we pay for Comcast?

AP: They are not a vendor. We do not pay them. Due diligence directs us to frequently find the best options.

GD: If it goes down do we back up to Comcast?

AP: They are not a vendor. If it goes down, we do not back up to Comcast.

MW: We do not. We use GCET only.

MG: The district pays for GCET. Do other departments or the city negotiate for GCET?

GD: No. I did not realize the schools were paying $6500/year. That is a lot of money.

AP: I am surprised that all departments do not pay for their internet.

B. Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Report

1. **Summer Eats:**
   - **a.** Title I program has been able to provide free books and pencils to those that attend the meal sites.
2. **Paul J. Andrews Executive Institute July 14-16, 2026.**
   - **a.** Both the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent attended this Institute where educational leaders from all across the Commonwealth were able to come together for collaboration and engagement in professional development.
3. **Professional Development and Convocation**
   - **a.** Preparations are underway while finishing up the Extended School Year Program that ends on August 13, 2026.
4. **Kindergarten registration is still underway.**
   - **a.** Families can enroll their kindergarten student(s) at the Central Office now through August 17, 2026. After that, families can go directly to the home school and enroll.

MG: How many Kindergarten students are enrolled?

CK: There is still room. There are 80 students at this time.

MG: I support parents who want inter-district choice. There are multiple parents who are choosing to go elsewhere. If we don't get them in Kindergarten, we don't get them back. Policy should not cause us to say no when we have declining enrollment.

5. **Home School update:**
   a. Closing out files for those that have graduated and approving Individual Home Education Plans for those that will be homeschooling for the 2026-2027 school year

C. Superintendent Report

1. **Staffing updates:**
   a. Assistant Directors of Pupil Services and a new Helpdesk Administrator are the newest hires. The district is still looking for General and Special Education teachers along with Instructional Assistants, Building-based substitutes and district-wide substitute teachers. Anyone interested should visit SchoolSpring to apply

MW: How many staff are we looking for?

CK: We are still hiring. One or two Special Education teachers and we still need more IAs. I signed a lot today and we will close them out on the website.

GD: We are always still needing IAs. Do we hire any part time?

CK: No. The day is six hours as it is. We don't have any three hour positions.

MG: Have we cut any positions.

CK: Not since I have been here.

MG: Any student teachers?

CK: I signed one practicum.

2. **Administrative Retreat:**
   a. August 17-18, 2026 district administration will be meeting to go over an array of topics such as communication, procedures, safety and security. Day two of the retreat will focus on Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training and restraint training.
3. **Shout Outs**
   a. To departments that have worked through the summer to ensure schools are ready such as our Information Technology Department, Custodial Department, Food Service Department, Transportation Department, Central Office staff, and Full-Year Administrative Assistants.

MW: Love the shout outs to each of these hard working departments. The food service workers are putting on the last dinner meal. I would like data on the other Summer Eats programs in the surrounding areas.

CK: It was extremely successful and very active and very well received.

MW: I heard one dinner had 177 people.

4. **Library Reading and Town Halls:**
   a. The Superintendent will be at the Greenfield Library on Saturday, August 15, 2026. Stop by and say "hi". She will also be setting up Town Hall meetings at all schools for faculty and staff and students to meet with her. Stay tuned.
5. **Fair Parade:**
   a. Thursday, September 10, 2026

V. Consent Agenda

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A. Vote to approve the minutes of July 8, 2026.
B. Second Read and Vote of Revised Policy IJNDB (Empowered Digital Use Policy).
C. Approve Administrative Family Engagement and Digital Communication Receptionist position description.
D. Approve School Handbooks.

1. **MG:** Remove B and D from consent agenda vote.
2. **MW:** Remove C.

GD moves to approve Item A, the minutes from July 8, 2026. MG seconds.

Vote: Motion passes unanimously by aye.

AC: Item B discussion.
MG: I would like technology removed from our schools. AI is just another level We don't know enough as educators about it to move forward. We have high school students who have not learned to write paragraphs or use of grammar and punctuation because of their dependence on technology. I would vote no and put paper, pencils, and books back in the hands of children and support students talking to each other.

GD moves Item B for the sake of discussion. AC seconds for the sake of discussion.

AC: I will be voting no. In the spring we had many students and people wanting to be involved in the research before we set policy. A better direction would be to allow more people to be involved for research and depth of understanding on this issue before setting policy.
GD: I am going to vote no because people asked for more knowledge about it. People want to know more about it.
JD: I would like to see an AI policy that foregrounds academic honesty and integrity and the importance of technology in achieving learning objectives. The framing here emphasizes the importance of everyone learning to use AI. I disagree with that message. The way this is framed prioritizes the importance of AI with academic honesty and integrity feeling secondary.

Vote: No: JD, AC, GD, MG. Abstain: MW. Motion fails to pass.

Item C:
AC moves to approve item C. GD seconds.

MW: I have questions about the job descriptions that I think would be better discussed in subcommittee.

CK: I wanted you to see the job description you approved. It is in the budget. It is not taking place of the communication plan, it's a support for that. I added to the job description to make sure that we are not asking to do things not in job description. Central office needs someone in the front for those who come in. We

need jobs that don't have a lot of idle time or boredom. Additions for digital work while there is a face for people entering to engage with, is to make sure that person has enough to do. This is line with our goals for improving communication. Make sure we aren't missing anything. This doesn't pull this role away from the front door, it's a way for adding extra duties and making sure they are busy.

GD: I am going to vote in favor of that. We have to update job descriptions all the time. We have to put down in writing what we are asking people to do.

Vote: Motion passes unanimously.

Item D
AC moves to approve School Handbooks. MW seconds.

JD: Academic Honesty and Integrity section has not been updated and has typos. It needs revision to reflect the current technological landscape. High School Principal's Welcome Back Address has not been proofread. Needs to be corrected before printing.
MG: I will vote no. When Handbooks were redone during pandemic. They haven't been looked at by a lawyer in a while. We should run them by a lawyer before approving.
CK: I understand they were looked at last year.
AC: Deadline for ready and distribution?
CK: By the beginning of the school year. Regarding academic integrity and honesty, I was under the impression that we were still working on that. The proofreading we can do.
AC: Can we do addendums later on or is it set in stone?
CK: Yes to addendums.
MW: IA completion would need to happen midyear also.
MG: Are the handbooks just online or are there printed versions handed to parents? Do we get signatures that they are read?
CK: We get signatures that they have been read.
MG: You can translate if it is online?
CK: Yes.
AC: I plan to vote yes with the understanding that it will be proofread and that the Academic Integrity section is yet to come after further discussion.

Vote: Motion passes with one abstention. GD abstains.

VI. School Committee Reports

A. Chair's Report

1. **Update on SC Summer Reads program.**
2. **Polling for a joint School Committee/Administration Training with Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) to cover: Roles/Responsibilities, Working Together Effectively, Communications Best Practices.**
3. **Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) Conference attendance – early bird ends September 5, 2026.**

AC: Chair Sexton asked that we come up with possible dates that we would be available for a three to four hour training on a weekend or weeknight outside of our regular meeting time in September or October.
MG: Don't we have to vote that we agree to do that?
AC: We do have a motion in New Business from ED that due to her absence will have to be moved to September. The purpose of discussing dates is in anticipation of a possible yes vote, we would have a very tight turnaround to discuss dates in September.
GD: The training is relevant to Rules and Responsibilities. I won't vote in favor of it. There are many additional obligations for our roles. I hear this from others as well as experience it myself..
JD: I will abstain from the vote. If the new motion passes I will be happy to discuss dates.
MG: I am voting no. I am otherwise engaged. We represent the citizens who vote for us. We should be asking questions that we think our constituents would want to know.
AC: The will of the members is to discuss dates if the motion passes but not before. The early bird rate ends September 5, 2026. If any members are planning to attend, please reach out to Chair Sexton.

B. Budget, Finance and Warrants Subcommittee Report See submitted materials.

1. -Vote to approve the Budget Calendar

AC moves MG seconds. Motion passes unanimous by Aye.

MG: Thank you for your hard work with color coding.
AC: Thank you in large part to former Member Martini for this.
GD: Think about any blurbs or summaries you want the city to print in the City Budget Book
MG: Does it have to go in the City Budget Book or can it be a separate document?
GD: When the City Budget Book goes out to everyone, for example FCTS has information about their services. It's an opportunity, the only time that some people will ever look at what the municipal budget is.
MG: Community Action had a nice budget and activities announcement in with the flyers in The Recorder that went to everybody's house. Because it had a beautiful cover, I sat down and read it from front to back. I was impressed with that document. It demonstrated how they were using their money. In South Hadley we sent something with water bills so that it went to everybody's house. Are you tied to it being part of the city budget book?
GD: It is part of the city budget book to have this kind of information. I think more information is good. It might be the only time someone gets to see it.
AC: It makes sense as part of building the school full budget book that we include an abbreviated digest.

C. Policy, Program, and School Committee Handbook Subcommittee Report See submitted materials

D. Community Engagement Subcommittee Report

MG: A community member joined. We want our community involved and to give them a voice. This community member suggested we host a Town Hall at the movie theater, high school students could supervise younger kids while watching a movie, while the parents engage the committee in discussions about the future. There are concerns about the future budget. What are the next steps? How do we save our programs? We also discussed that there seems to be a lot of subcommittees and a lot of meetings. We question whether Community Engagement (CE) should be a part of every committee and why CE was not charged with the conversation about Long Term Facilities Use. It feels like we are not dealing with the issues that we should be.

GD: I think we should look at the number of meetings as well. Our new superintendent is asked to precinct meetings, city council meetings, etc. in addition to these. City council also made a new subset with CE. Meetings involving schools, you want the superintendent there. We want to be at the school and student events. There are only so many hours in a day.

E. Long-Term Facilities Use Advisory Committee See submitted materials.

1. Vote to appoint Rose Skriloff to a staff position within the Advisory Committee

AC moves. MW seconds.

Vote: Motion passes unanimously by Aye.

2. MW: One more staff position is available. We meet the 1st and 4th Wednesday of the month, rotating for holidays.

3. MG: What is the purpose and goals of this committees?

MW: To be established with full membership.

MG: My number one concern is that we are burning out people and superintendents with meetings. The full committee should be discussing building a new school. It should not be going to a subcommittee. We make silos to keep people out with subcommittees because we don't respect their opinions. We need to learn to respect everybody's opinion. This should be brought up, maybe at every meeting and talked about if there are goals. You created a committee and you don't have a goal. I believe the goal is to get a new school built. We are being told what to do. I was suddenly told to go to the library and read to children but it wasn't discussed. There are certain members of this committee that are doing their own thing and leaving out other members of the committee. We all should have an equal voice. I definitely feel that at Budget and Finance. At CE we really said our piece. There are too many meetings and too many subcommittees. Other districts only have a policy subcommittee and a finance subcommittee. CE should be our number one priority as elected officials. We can't just do what we want. We are responsible for the oversight of kid's education. People are leaving and nobody is asking why. We need to pay attention to that. Exit interviews are not happening. We have people come to us and say what is happening and then we just ignore it. Our purpose as a committee is oversight and to make sure

our community has great schools. We didn't want to talk about reading. We don't want to talk about academics. We don't even know

MG: I am calling point of order. This is just my report. The committee is made up of members of the community. Our superintendent has been told they are able to attend if they choose to but are not required to attend.

AC: The committee charges to draft a long term facilities use plan. We assume this could mean a new school, it does not *necessarily* mean a new school. It could mean consolidating what we have. It is looking at those variables. We did vote on this committee.

MW: Anyone can show up and speak during public comment.

GD: 2039 would be the soonest for a new school. We should plan for what we are doing in the meantime.

MG: I have been an educator for 38 years. The school committee should not be making the recommendations. The superintendent should be the decider of closing schools. She will be in the buildings every day. Let her do her job. We support her by communicating with community and making it a positive energy around change instead of a negative. Greenfield has history of negative responses to change. By having conversations early, avoids negativity. By having conversations early, everybody having a voice, that is what CE is about. Another committee isn't what we need. We have a full time superintendent who can give us her opinion and we vote on that.

AC: We already did vote to have the advisory. You can make a motion for new business for our next meeting? Would you like to discuss subcommittees in general or just this subcommittee?

MG: There should be a motion to disband that committee because it is countless hours and a superintendent would need to be there. We also need to look at all the subcommittees and stop making committees for the sake of subcommittees and look at what we don't need. One superintended said "I am too busy taking care of the school committee to fix our schools." If she is at a meeting every single night I want a superintendent who can make sure our kids know how to read and making sure our teachers are doing what needs to be done. We are asking for oversight at a level...

AC: We don't need the discussion tonight. Submit your motions to Becky for the next meeting.

VII. New Business

A. Motion by Member de Neeve that the Greenfield School Committee undergo a training on roles and responsibilities by MASC.

Member ED is absent.

AC moves to postpone this motion to September. JD seconds. Motion passes unanimously by Aye.

VIII. Old Business

A. Legal compliance Review Findings

MG: I thought we asked to see the quotes.

AP: No this was to have them review the process. We just needed to tighten up our quote tracking.
MG: I think if we bring it to these meetings they will become part of the minutes and be searchable by constituents that way also. I want to be responsible to taxpayers. If quotes could come to our meetings then they will be a part of this record as well.

AC moves to charge the Budget and Finance Committee to do deeper look at standardization to bring quotes to school committee meeting for public documentation. MG seconds

AP: I have a quote ledger format and can bring that to these meetings.

AC withdraws the motion with the understanding that the business manager will include the quote ledger as part of the business manager reports. MG agrees to withdraw the second.

IX. Vote to enter into Executive Session: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21 (a) (3) To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. The committee will not return to Open Session.

AC Moves. MW seconds. Motion passes unanimously by roll call.

X. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:13pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Nan Sibley
Administrative Assistant