Greenfield School Committee
Community Engagement Sub-Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2026

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1. Call to Order:
   The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. via Zoom.

   MG read the Chair Statement relative to meeting recordings.

2. Roll Call of Members:
   Present: Melodie Goodwin, Chair (MG), Jeffrey Diteman (JD), Mayor Virginia DeSorgher (VD)

   Also present: Carol Kruser, Superintendent of Schools (CK)

3. Public Comment:
   There were no members of the public present for comment at this time.

   On a motion by JD, 2nd by MG, this sub-committee voted to add a discussion of a community priority survey to the agenda. The roll call vote was unanimous.

   Community Priority Survey (discussion):
   JD reviewed the contents of the draft survey he prepared for this initiative:
   Individual's relationship with the schools:
   - Parent/Guardian?
   - School
   - Student or Staff?
   - Alum or resident?

   CK noted, as part of her Entry Plan, it is her intent to incorporate questions in separate Google forms; one for students, one for families, and one for staff.

   JD shared the following issues of concern that are heard in public discussions (to be ranked by survey participants on a scale of 1-5):
   - Bullying
   - Substance abuse
   - Absenteeism
   - Appropriate use of technology
   - Mental health
   - Academic achievement
   - Literacy
   - Math competence
   - Science knowledge
   - AP options
   - Special education or disability services
   - Zoning issues

   On a motion by JD, 2nd by VD, this sub-committee suspended Robert's Rules of Order in order to openly discuss the survey topics. The roll call vote was unanimous.

   JD noted the purpose of this survey would be to get an idea of how the community feels about these issues.

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Also discussed was music offerings within the district. CK noted:

- All middle school students are taking music this year for the first time
- Our elementary music teacher is doing a wonderful job and is now teaching students to play the ukulele
- Our students are being exposed to more music now than in past years

JD noted the possible move of 5th grade students as an ongoing topic of community discussion. CK stated the group involved in this particular discussion is much smaller than in the past, and she hears positive feedback from parents relative to our 5th grade teachers. She suggested we let the discussion from the Long-Term Facilities Use Advisory Committee play out to determine next steps.

MG stated matters of discussion also include our buildings, declining enrollments, and the costs associated to run our buildings, which many of our current sub-committees (Community Engagement, Long-term Facilities Use, and Budget & Finance) are also having. A decision needs to be made and now is the time to make it. CK reminded this sub-committee that it is the intent of the Long-term Facilities Use Advisory Committee to make a decision for 2028.

JD shared another item to be included on the survey (to also be ranked on a scale of 1-5):
"In light of a trend in declining enrollment, what changes do you think the district should prioritize?"

a. Consolidating elementary schools
b. Merging with nearby districts
c. Improving educational offerings to keep families in the district
d. Better PR to promote our schools and encourage families to stay in the district

CK noted there will be a guest speaker attending the next Long-term Facilities Use Advisory Committee meeting to discuss redistricting.

VD inquired with CK if the topic of redistricting/regionalization has come up in discussion with other superintendents. CK confirmed the topic has come up in conversation with colleagues, but that the topic involves a lot of necessary comprehensive research. We will obtain additional information from the speaker at the upcoming Long-term Facilities Use Advisory Committee meeting.

JD also reviewed the following two questions he is proposing for inclusion in the survey:

1. Parents/Guardians:
   What changes would make you more likely to keep your students in the district until high school graduation?
2. Students:
   Which of these changes would make you more likely to want to stay in the district until graduation?:
   a. Additional technical learning options
   b. Expanded apprenticeship opportunities
   c. Expanded arts programs
   d. Additional AP classes
   e. Additional outdoor time
   f. Higher academic standards
   g. Improved accommodations for students with disabilities
   h. Improved school climate

He shared the final question would be open-ended: "What is the most important single area for improvement?"

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The question would now be whether we allow the superintendent to continue to develop her survey as part of her Entry Plan, or do we also conduct our own? JD noted he was happy to leave this in the superintendent's hands from here. CK shared she has scheduled herself time at each of the schools this week to give staff the opportunity to talk with her. It is her hope to get her surveys out right after the Thanksgiving Break.

On a motion by JD, 2nd by VD, this sub-committee voted to submit this document to the superintendent and leave it in her hands to use as she sees fit. The roll call vote was unanimous.

4. Approval of Sub-Committee Minutes – August 10, 2026:
   The vote on this item was inadvertently omitted. It will be added to the next meeting agenda.

5. Discussion of Topics for the Year-Long Agenda:
   MG noted a lot of work has been done within this sub-committee since its inception last year. She wants to make sure we continue the work that engages the community in our decision-making initiatives, giving them an opportunity to be heard.

   MG is proposing a year-long calendar that outlines the monthly goals of this sub-committee.

   Discussion ensued relative to ParentSquare, the new communication format we are using to communicate with parents, students, and parents/community, which is in complete adherence with the new ADA law soon to be put in place. This format has been a wonderful source for which to send alerts, notices, newsletters, etc. As a result, we've already seen an increase in family engagement, whether at the Harvest Parade or at Halloween events.

   When asked what the members of this sub-committee could do to enhance community engagement, CK noted it would just be helpful to be apprised of the community events that are happening in the City. These events would not only give her the opportunity to meet new people, but also allow her an additional venue for which to speak with families about our schools.

   CK shared we currently have a district calendar on our website, as well as a monthly newsletter from each school that includes their monthly calendar of events.

   After discussion, it was the consensus of this sub-committee to schedule two dates in March to set up a table at the library and have School Committee members available for one-hour shifts to speak with community members and listen to their thoughts and concerns. The suggestion would be to create a spring School Committee calendar for said sign-ups, and also as a means to post any other community-related events of interest.

   Another suggestion was to also have School Committee members present at community meetings at Leyden Woods and Elm Terrace.

   Also discussed was reinstating a liaison to City Council, committing the individual to attend as many meetings as possible.

   Items to include on the proposed calendar:
   - February – Winter Carnival
   - March – School Committee "Meet & Greet" at the library
   - April – Poet Seat Poetry Contest, Kindergarten Enrollment
   - May – Kindergarten Enrollment
   - June – Pride Parade

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6. Discussion regarding ways for the sub-committee to engage the community:
   This item was discussed in conjunction with agenda item #5.

7. Adjournment:
   On a motion by JD, 2nd by MG, the meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Approved:

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