

**BUSINESS MEETING**

January 8, 2025

The Business Meeting of the Stafford Township Board of Education was held on January 8, 2025 at 7:03pm at the Stafford Township Arts Center (STAC) and was live streamed over the web.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Stafford Township Board of Education is called to order in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act Law - 1975 Chapter 231 (P.L. 1975-231C). This meeting was advertised in the Atlantic City Press. Notice has been posted in the office of the Stafford Township Clerk, all school buildings and on the district website. A mechanical device is being used to video record this meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Brian Fenlon	Member
Gregory Gioe	Member
Robert Morello	Member
Matthew Regulski	Member
Christopher Smith	Member
Bonnie Strouse	Member
Joseph Washco	Member
Kevin Cooney	Member
Tammy Wagner	Member

**ALSO PRESENT**

Stephanie Bush	Acting Superintendent
Lourdes LaGuardia	Business Administrator/Board of Education Secretary
Martin J. Buckley, Esq.	Board of Education Attorney

**FLAG SALUTE**

**A. RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS**

~SSDS Presentation (July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024) –  
Richard Meyer and Kristin Ducker

- Mr. Meyer and Mrs. Ducker presented the data for the Student Safety Data System (SSDS) for July through December 2024. The report included the number of reports of HIB, the status of all investigations, the nature of the HIB, names of investigators, and the type and nature of any discipline imposed, and any other measures imposed, training conducted, and programs implemented to reduce HIB.

## ~ School Board Recognition

- Mrs. Bush read the Board Recognition Proclamation and a video presentation was shown in recognition of Board Appreciation Month.
- Mrs. Ducker introduced the Student Ambassadors and explained that they were chosen at the beginning of the year by their peers and are shadowing the Board Members in recognition of Board Appreciation Month: Annika, Mackenzie, Navarah, Sierra, Lucas, Riley, Maddyn, Milania, Emily, Willow, Hope, Jenna, Damain, Isabella, Nora, Kendall, Olivia and Andee

Mrs. Wagner concluded with a thank you.

**B. SUPERINTENDENT'S EDUCATIONAL REPORT - Attachment**

Mrs. Bush, Acting Superintendent, shared the following highlights from each building.

**STAC Events**

- Max's Magic Show 2/15/2025 @ 7:00pm
- Taylor's Story 3/1/2025 @ 7:30pm
- The Doo Wop Project 3/13/2025 @7:30pm

Please go to our website [www.stacnj.com](http://www.stacnj.com) for tickets.

**Oxycocus** - December was a festive time. The students made the "nice" list, Mr. and Mrs. Claus made a special visit to the school and took a picture with every class. Additionally, our self-contained PSD students had breakfast with Santa with the help of the SRHS Kiwanis Club at the Ship Bottom Firehouse. Students learned about clothes and winter themed activities. The month ended with holiday parties where parent volunteers brought in a craft/activity and a snack.

**PLC** - Teacher of the Year was announced on December 5<sup>th</sup> - Congratulations Mrs. Toth, support staff member – Deb Dalessandro, and district ESP - Kelsey Schmidt. Congratulations to all district winners, we are fortunate to have such a great staff!!! At the PLC we started with "Holiday" Spirit month on December 2<sup>nd</sup> with lots of holiday cheer, colors and outfits throughout the PLC each day - gave all who entered the feeling of Joy and Happiness! Picture Make-up Day was full of smiles on December 11<sup>th</sup> - Lifetouch did an excellent job accommodating our students/families; taking beautiful pictures! Santa surprised the PLC students with a visit on December 6<sup>th</sup>; it was amazing – Twitter was overflowing with pictures/excitement and joyous moments. The Grinch made a special stop at the PLC on the 12<sup>th</sup>, it was a green day for sure! We ended December with a wonderful Sing-A-Long!!! We want to wish everyone a very happy, healthy holiday season!

**Ocean Acres** - The OA winter wonderland of trees went up right after Thanksgiving to start the holiday season! Classes decorated the trees with ornaments to help create a festive holiday welcome for our visitors. Early in December the students and staff started collecting and counting of PJ sets. This year, Ocean Acres collected a total of 130 sets of pajamas. The pajamas were donated to the Ocean County Family Support Organization, a community participant in the Pajama Program. In addition, Scholastic will be donating 130 new books to children in need. Great job Mrs. Bohm for organizing the Pajama Drive! The OA preschoolers got a surprise visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Mr. Isaryk treated the students to dismissal holiday fun by dressing up in fun costumes for the last week of the month. The month ended with festive parties and the annual holiday staff show produced by Mrs. Titus. It was a wonderful holiday season at OA.

**McKinley** - December found the McKinley Mustangs full of holiday cheer! We decked our doors and celebrated with our annual Staff Holiday Show. Once again, our staff came together to put on a show to end all shows for our students. A joyous, memorable time was had by all! We finished the 2024 year with a district-wide Holiday Spirit Week! The week kicked off with Holiday Hat Day. Tuesday found our Mustangs shining bright as we dressed in red, gold, blue, silver, and green to show off our Holiday Spirit! Of course, you can't have a true Holiday Spirit Week without a Snuggle Day! Students and Staff enjoyed a comfy, cozy day in their favorite Holiday outfits. Thursday we spread more cheer with our Holiday Shirt Day and we wrapped up the week with a smashing array of Holiday Socks and Ugly Sweater Day! The students and staff of the McKinley Avenue Elementary School wish everyone Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

**Intermediate** - What a fun month at Stafford Intermediate. The month began with the Teacher of the Year announcement. Congratulations to Ms. Jen Rowland on being named TOTY. Also a big congratulations to the Intermediate Support Staff Member of the Year - Ms. Michelle Horne. Students were surprised this month with a holiday parade. Thank you to Milkshake the Chick-fil-a cow, the Grinch and Stafford PD for participating! The Intermediate Winter Concert was amazing! The Instrumental Band, Jazz Band, Strings Band, B Natural and Intermediate Choir all performed. What a talented group of students! Students built gingerbread houses this month for the team challenge. The month rounded out with a holiday spirit week. It was fun to have all the students participating!

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

\*NOTE: If a board member was absent (listed below), they are to abstain from the vote on that item/meeting.

To approve the minutes of the following meeting(s):

1. November 18, 2024 Committee of the Whole – No Absences
2. November 18, 2024 Business Meeting – No Absences
3. November 18, 2024 Closed Session #1 – No Absences

4. November 18, 2024 Closed Session #2 – No Absences
5. December 9, 2024 Committee of the Whole – 3 Absences (G. Gioe, R. Morello, B. Strouse)
6. December 9, 2024 Business Meeting – 2 Absences (G. Gioe, R. Morello)

A motion was made by Mr. Morello and seconded by Mr. Cooney to approve Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s) #1-6. Roll call vote items #1-4: nine (9) members present voted yes; motion passed. Roll call vote item #5: six (6) members present voted yes; motion passed. Mr. Gioe, Mr. Morello and Mrs. Strouse abstained on item #5. Roll call vote item #6: seven (7) members present voted yes; motion passed. Mr. Gioe and Mr. Morello abstained on item #6.

**D. COMMUNICATION FROM THE PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)**

None

**E. CORRESPONDENCE TO AND FROM THE BOARD**

Board President Mrs. Wagner read:

- Correspondence was received and read from Karen Ray regarding support for the superintendent.

**F. BOARD BUSINESS**

1. There were no incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying.
2. To approve researchers for the New Jersey Autism Study (NJAS) from Rutgers University-New Jersey Medical School to examine the education records of children receiving special education as part of this multiple source investigation. Rutgers University-New Jersey Medical School under funding provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is conducting a follow-up study as part of the Autism Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network.
3. To approve the attached Sidebar Agreement between Stafford Township Education Association (STEA) and Stafford Township Board of Education dated January 6, 2025 with regard to Registered Behavior Technicians.
4. To approve the following Resolution to cite School Board Recognition Month.

**Resolution: Stafford Township Board of Education**

**WHEREAS,** The New Jersey School Boards Association has declared January 2025 to be School Board Recognition Month, a time when all residents can acknowledge the contributions made by our local school board members; and

**WHEREAS,** The Stafford Township Board of Education is one of 581 local school

boards in New Jersey, which sets policies and oversees operations for public school districts; and

**WHEREAS,** The Stafford Township Board of Education embraces the goal of high-quality education for all New Jersey public school students; and

**WHEREAS,** New Jersey's local school boards help determine the educational goals for approximately 1.4 million children in pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade; and

**WHEREAS,** New Jersey's 5,000 local school board members, who receive no remuneration for their services, act as advocates for public school students as they work with administrators, teachers and parents for the betterment of public education; and

**WHEREAS,** School boards strive to provide the resources necessary to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs; and

**WHEREAS,** Boards of education provide accountability to the public; they communicate the needs of the school district to the public; and they convey to school administrators the public's expectations for the schools; and

**WHEREAS,** New Jersey can take pride in its schools, which rank among the nation's best in key achievement indicators such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores, and the preparation for college through advanced placement offerings and SAT assessments; Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That the Stafford Township Board of Education, does hereby recognize the services of local school board members throughout New Jersey as we join communities statewide in observing January 2025 as SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That the Stafford Township Board of Education urges all New Jersey citizens to work with their local boards of education and public school staffs toward the advancement of our children's education.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Washco to approve Board Business item(s) #1-4. Roll call vote: nine (9) members present voted yes; motion passed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**G. FINANCE/INSURANCE/TRANSPORTATION**

The Committee of the Whole has reviewed the following action items, has consulted with the superintendent, school business administrator/board secretary and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certifies that the actions being approved are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals. In addition, we further certify that

we have reviewed the attached bill list and are satisfied that curriculum related expenditures are directly related to the results of assessment data and that professional development expenditures are directly related to professional development plans.

1. To approve for payment of January 2025 bills list totaling \$411,403.13 as attached. (G-1)

- Fund 10 - \$200,102.46
- Fund 20 - \$200,050.81
- Fund 30 - \$0
- Fund 40 - \$0
- Fund 60 - \$0
- Fund 61 - \$0
- Fund 62 - \$11,249.86

\*Note - \$32,137.39 of the amounts listed were made as EFT payments. (G-1a)

\*To approve for payment of December 2024 additional bills list totaling \$243,577.57 as attached. (G-1b)

- Fund 10 - \$111,418.62
- Fund 20 - \$5,045.71
- Fund 30 - \$0
- Fund 40 - \$0
- Fund 60 - \$109,674.51
- Fund 61 - \$1,117.48
- Fund 62 - \$16,321.25

\*Note - \$1,117.48 of the amounts listed were made as EFT payments. (G-1c)

\*To approve for payment of November 2024 additional bills list totaling \$1,023.58 as attached. (G-1d)

- Fund 10 - \$1,023.58
- Fund 20 - \$0
- Fund 30 - \$0
- Fund 40 - \$0
- Fund 60 - \$0
- Fund 61 - \$0
- Fund 62 - \$0

\*Note - \$0 of the amounts listed were made as EFT payments. (G-1e)

2. To approve for payment of payroll
  - a. dated December 13, 2024 totaling \$1,541,873.87
3. To accept the Treasurer’s Report for the month of November 2024.
4. To accept the Secretary’s Report for the month of November 2024.
5. Certification of Overexpenditures:

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c)3, I, Lourdes LaGuardia, Board of Education Secretary, certify that as of November 2024 no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures, which in total exceed the line item appropriation in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board of Education Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Board Resolution:

Through the adoption of this resolution, we, the Stafford Township Board of Education, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c)4, certify that as of November 2024 after review of the secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the business administrator and other appropriate district officials, that no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(b)4 I-VI and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

6. To approve the attached line item transfers for November 2024.
7. To authorize the Business Administrator to make payment of post-Board meeting bills for the month of January 2025 and to execute mid-cycle contracts such as utilities and out-of-district contracts. Specifics of these transactions, if any, will be provided for ratification at the next regular scheduled board meeting.
8. To approve the attached list of donations.
9. To authorize the Business Administrator to transfer \$200,000 from the NJ Unemployment Fund to the General Fund.
10. To authorize the Business Administrator to transfer \$200,000 from the Extended Day Program Fund to the General Fund.
11. To approve student #25649 to receive home instruction for the 2024/2025 school year, commencing November 11, 2024 and ending December 13, 2024. This

student will receive 10 hours of home instruction per week at the rate of \$51.44 per hour.

12. To approve the attached Agreement from Lifetouch National School Studios, Inc. for photographic services for the 2025-2026 school year. The financial giveback will be 15% on fall package sales and 10% on spring package sales for each school, less sales tax to be paid on packages purchased from the flyer package selection up to 48 hours after picture day. These proceeds will be deposited to the student activity account for each school.
13. To approve to terminate the Receiving District Tuition Contract from Manchester Township Board of Education for McKinney-Vento students #25289 and #25290, effective December 31, 2024. Further, pursuant to McKinney-Vento Act to accept Out of District Tuition from Barnegat Township Board of Education for these students from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$14,155.56 for student #25289 and \$9,253.44 for student #25290.

A motion was made by Mr. Fenlon and seconded by Mr. Morello to approve Finance/Insurance/Transportation item(s) #1-13. Roll call vote item #1: nine (9) members present voted yes; motion passed. Roll call vote item #2: eight (8) members present voted yes; motion passed. Mr. Gioe abstained on item #2. Roll call vote items #3-13: nine (9) members present voted yes; motion passed.

#### **H. BUILDINGS/GROUNDS/CAFETERIA**

The Buildings/Grounds/Cafeteria Committee has reviewed the following action items, has consulted with the school business administrator/board secretary and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certifies that the actions being approved are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals.

NO ACTION ITEMS

#### **I. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION/TECHNOLOGY**

The Committee of the Whole has reviewed the following action items, has consulted with the superintendent and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certifies that the actions being approved are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals. In addition, we further certify that we have reviewed the attached professional development request list and are satisfied that each professional development event is directly related to the employee's duties, each event is fiscally prudent (consistent with N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12), that teaching staff requests are aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and that administrator requests are aligned to the Professional Standards for School Leaders.

1. To approve the professional development requests shown on the attached listing.

A motion was made by Mr. Cooney and seconded by Mrs. Strouse to approve Curriculum/Instruction/Technology item(s) #1. Roll call vote: nine (9) members present voted yes; motion passed.

**J. PERSONNEL**

The following Personnel items were discussed:

Chairperson of the Personnel Committee – Tammy Wagner

Report: The superintendent recommends the board approve/ratify the appointment of the following named individuals who constitute a careful selection and screening of applicants, in accordance with the board/district hiring policies/procedures, and are hereby recommended for an employment contract contingent upon the successful completion of their accredited degree program, New Jersey Department of Education certification requirements, Federal NCLB Highly qualified Teacher requirements, a criminal history clearance and the successful completion of a medical examination as required by the board of education. These initial assignments/appointments may be changed as district needs develop unless otherwise stipulated. The Personnel/Policy Committee has reviewed the following action items, has consulted with the superintendent and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certifies that the actions being approved are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals.

1. To approve the attached list of substitutes for the 2024-2025 school year.
2. To approve the following resignations:
  - a. Heather Bernstein, Teacher Aide, effective December 11, 2024
  - b. Rebecca Hill, Teacher Aide, effective January 2, 2025
  - c. Dawn Kopcho, CPA, effective January 1, 2025
3. To approve the following leaves:
  - a. Employee ID #6641, unpaid family leave FMLA, beginning December 9, 2024 and returning December 16, 2024
  - b. Employee ID #6663, unpaid family leave FMLA, beginning November 26, 2024 and returning January 2, 2025
  - c. Employee ID #6608, unpaid family leave FMLA, beginning January 13, 2025 and returning January 27, 2025
4. To approve the attached list of additional staff for the Extended Day Program for the 2024-2025 school year.
5. To approve Stephanie Woram to receive MA+30 stipend, beginning September 1, 2025.

6. To approve the attached list of student fieldwork placements for the 2024-2025 school year.
7. To approve to rescind the employment of Dorothy Fattoross, Part Time Teacher Aide, for the 2024-2025 school year.
8. To approve Christine MacCotter as Part Time Hourly Teacher Aide, MD Class, Ocean Acres Elementary School, beginning January 2, 2025 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 1, +BA, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a new position due to an IEP.
9. To approve Sheena Harper as Part Time Hourly Teacher Aide, ERI Class, Ocean Acres Elementary School, beginning December 16, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, Step 1, pro-rated, of the Stafford Township Board of Education/STEA Agreement. This is a new position due to an IEP.

***Employee appointments are provisional pending satisfactory completion of the Criminal History Background Check, Pre-employment P.L. 2018,C.5 Disclosure and Physical Exam Requirements required by the State of New Jersey.***

A motion was made by Mr. Fenlon and seconded by Mr. Washco to approve Personnel item(s) #1-9. Roll call vote: nine (9) members present voted yes; motion passed.

**K. POLICY/LEGISLATIVE**

The Committee of the Whole has reviewed the following policies and regulations, has consulted with the board attorney and other appropriate district officials, and hereby certify, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1, that the attached policies and regulations are in compliance with all applicable statutes and administrative code provisions and are consistent with the 2024-2025 board/district goals.

NO ACTION ITEMS

**L. ADVANCED PLANNING**

None

**M. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**N. BOARD INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**O. CLOSED SESSION**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Cooney and seconded by Mr. Morello to adjourn the meeting at 7:49pm. Voice vote: All members present voted yes (9-0); motion passed.

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Lourdes LaGuardia  
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

LL/km/1-13-2025