

March 10, 2025

The Stillwater Township Board of Education met on March 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Stillwater School Library for a Committee of the Whole Board of Education Meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Krista Galante, President, at 7:00 p.m. In accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law, the time, date and location of this meeting was provided to the New Jersey Herald & Star Ledger on January 7, 2025. Notices were posted in the Stillwater School, Town Hall, Stillwater Post Office, Swartswood Post Office and the Stillwater School Website.

Mrs. Galante led the flag salute. The following Board members were present: Mrs. Galante, Mrs. Williver, Mrs. Valeich, Mrs. Frey, Mrs. Voris, Mrs. Kraft and Mrs. Thibault.

Absent: Mr. DeGroat and Mr. Franek.

Also present were William Kochis, Superintendent, René Metzgar, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, and members of the public.

BOARD BUSINESS

That the following Board Business resolution be approved:

1. Motion to approve the Regular Board of Education Meeting minutes & Executive Session meeting minutes from February 24, 2025. (attachment)

Moved By: Mrs. Thibault **Seconded By:** Mrs. Frey

Voice Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Absent; Mr. Franek-Absent; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye.
Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PERSONNEL

That the following Personnel resolutions be approved as recommended by Superintendent:

1. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve attached professional days. (attachment)
2. Motion to accept with regret, the resignation of William Kochis, Superintendent, effective May 31, 2025.

3. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the following substitute teacher/paraprofessional/main office secretary for the 2024-2025 school year:

-Denise Bessemer-Pending criminal history & background check

4. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the following graduate class at Felician University for Laura Ciccolella, no reimbursement as per SEA contract:

<u>Title of Course</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Internship in Administration	August 25, 2025- December 16, 2025	\$897.00

5. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to revise the following graduate class approval that was previously approved at the January 27, 2025 meeting as no reimbursement:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title of Course</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Revised Reimbursement</u>
Maureen Riva	Data Driven Decision Making	1/20/25- 5/1/25	\$1,322	Centenary University	Yes, As per SEA Contract

Moved By: Mrs. Frey **Seconded By:** Mrs. Kraft

Mrs. Galante thanked Dr. Kochis for the 6 years of service and congratulated him on his new job. He will be missed!

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Absent; Mr. Franek-Absent; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motions carried.

POLICY

That the following Policy resolution be approved:

1. Motion to approve the first reading of the following revised policy:

Policy#6171.4 Special Education (attachment)

Moved By: Mrs. Frey **Seconded By:** Mrs. Thibault

Voice Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Absent; Mr. Franek-Absent; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motion carried.

EDUCATION & CURRICULUM

That the following Education & Curriculum resolution be approved:

1. Be It Hereby Resolved, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board affirms the Superintendent's decision regarding 2024-2025 Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Case #3-2425.
2. Motion to approve the ASE/SEEK Program, running May 5, 7, 12, 14, 2025 for a cost to Fairview Lake YMCA in the amount of \$152.00/trip to be paid through the Township Alliance Grant.
3. Motion to approve Madeline Loza from Montclair State University to observe several PK-3 classrooms for 5 hours on March 13th & 14th for the Spring 2025 semester.

Moved By: Mrs. Williver **Seconded By:** Mrs. Valeich

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Absent; Mr. Franek-Absent; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motions carried.

BUILDING & GROUNDS

That the following Building & Grounds resolution be approved:

1. Motion to approve K&B Contractors, LLC to complete ceiling repairs and paint the kitchen in the amount of \$16,915. Bid# HCESC-SER-24-20.

Moved By: Mrs. Williver **Seconded By:** Mrs. Kraft

Voice Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Absent; Mr. Franek-Absent; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motion carried.

TRANSPORTATION

That the following Transportation resolution be approved:

1. Motion to approve transportation with Stocker Bus for the following field trip for the 2025-2026 school year:

Date	Location	Grade	Cost
May 5, 7, 12, 14, 2025	Fairview Lake YMCA	Grade 6 SEEK	\$88.52/trip=\$354.08 Paid through Title IV 61% 20-280-200-500 & Township Alliance Grant.

Moved By: Mrs. Valeich **Seconded By:** Mrs. Williver

Voice Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Absent; Mr. Franek-Absent; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motion carried.

BUDGET & FINANCE

1. Review of 2025-2026 Tentative Budget- Dr. Kochis & Mrs. Metzgar presented the 2025-2026 tentative school budget. Detailed information was provided regarding projected revenues and expenditures. Information was also provided on state aid, tax levy and impact, enrollment projection, available adjustments, school programs, building projects, and the future of funding for the district.

That the following Budget & Finance resolution be approved:

2. Motion to introduce the preliminary 2025-2026 School Budget and authorize the School Business Administrator to submit the preliminary budget to the Sussex County Office of Education for compliance and approval for advertisement as follows:

<u>Expenditures</u>		<u>Revenues</u>	
Charter School	<u>\$123,321</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	
General Current Expense	<u>\$7,009,306</u>	..Budgeted Fund Balance	\$524,197
Capital Outlay	<u>\$16,790</u>	..Local Tax Levy	\$5,924,794
Special Revenue Fund	<u>\$1,162,564</u>	..Capital Reserve	\$0
		..Capital Reserve Int.	\$15,000
		..Maintenance Reserve	\$80,000
		..Maintenance Res. Int.	\$6,000
Repayment of Debt	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	..Misc Revenue	\$ 20,000
		..Tuition	\$6,800
		..State Aid	\$572,626
		...SEMI	\$0
		Total General Fund:	\$7,149,417
Total Expenditures	<u>\$8,311,981</u>	<u>Special Revenue Fund</u>	
		..Federal & State Aid	\$1,162,564
		<u>Debt Service</u>	\$0.00
		Total Revenue	\$8,311,981

As per NJAC 6A:23A-7.3, the proposed budget provides for a maximum expenditure amount that may be allotted for travel and expense reimbursement. The maximum amount of travel and expense reimbursement for the 2024-2025 budget was \$10,494. As of March 1, 2025 the amount spent to date is \$5,282.63. The 2025-2026 tentative budget includes a maximum travel appropriation of \$11,546. The School Business Administrator shall track and record these costs to insure that the maximum amount is not exceeded. Included in the 2025-2026 proposed budget is a maximum regular business travel amount of \$1,500 per employee.

Further be it resolved, the Stillwater Township Board of Education approves the use of \$132,354 in Enrollment Adjustment, which will support instructional costs in the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget.

Further be it resolved, the Stillwater Township Board of Education approves the use of \$119,736 in Healthcare Adjustment, which will support increased costs of healthcare in the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget.

Further be it resolved, that included in line 630, Budgeted Withdrawal from Maintenance Reserve is \$80,000 for parking lot repairs and general maintenance costs.

This proposed budget includes sufficient funds to provide curriculum and instruction which will enable all students to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and is in compliance with N.J.S.A. 18A and N.J.A.C. Title 6 and 6A.

Moved By: Mrs. Thibault **Seconded By:** Mrs. Frey

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Absent; Mr. Franek-Absent; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motion carried.

That the following Budget & Finance resolution be approved:

3. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Stillwater Township Board of Education approves the submission of the 2025-2026 PEA (Preschool Education Aid) Grant Application to the NJ Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Education (Grant application and execute a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Education for four full-day Pre-K classrooms).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board formally approves the budget workbook and narrative submission for the grant listed above for a total award of \$908,922 of PEA aid based on per pupil costs, 25% Carryover deduction of \$-52,829, \$47,838 general fund contribution as required, and the use of \$111,327 in carry over funds. Grand total of the 2025-2026 anticipated budget of \$1,015,258.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the school administrators are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application to the New Jersey Department of Education on behalf of the Stillwater Township Board of Education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Superintendent and Business Administrator are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the Stillwater Township Board of Education and that their signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement.

Moved By: Mrs. Thibault **Seconded By:** Mrs. Kraft

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Absent; Mr. Franek-Absent; Mrs. Frey- Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motion carried.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Mrs. Voris reported on the following items:

- Stillwater Rec- Soccer Registration is now open
- Kittatinny Education Foundation- Dinner Dance on March 29th
- Stillwater Rec hosts Senior Citizen presentation series on March 18th
- Stillwater Rec- Easter Egg Hunt- April 12th at Veterans Park
- Stillwater PTA Family Fun Skate Night- March 20th
- Stillwater PTA Tricky Tray- March 29th
- 4-H Breakfast with the bunnies- March 30th
- Stillwater Clean Up Day- June 7th

LEGISLATIVE

Mrs. Metzgar reported that Governor Murphy signed a bill to continue to allow school districts to publish public notices or legal advertisements in a newspaper in either print or electronic format through June 30, 2025.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

*This public session is designed for members of the public to speak on items for Board consideration. By law, the Board of Education is under no obligation to respond to public comment. If the Board of Education chooses to respond, it does not waive its right thereafter not to respond. Members of the public are asked to state their name and address for the record. ***Members of the public are requested to keep their comments to a maximum of 5 minutes. ***

Dave Manser- Stillwater Township Liaison- He understands the budget is very tough to develop especially with losing all the state aid. He commended the board for a job well done. Mr. Manser also thanked Dr. Kochis and expressed he was sad to see him leave, but good luck in the future.

Kaitlyn Hammerle-952 Millbrook Road- Asked about the snack policy for school parties if it is directed from the state or a local policy. Dr. Kochis responded that it is a local policy developed and reviewed by our wellness committee. Mrs. Hammerle also questioned the difference of snacks at the parties and the snacks available for school lunch. Dr. Kochis said that our wellness committee is still working on different ideas to ensure the healthy eating of our students throughout the day.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by Mrs. Thibault, second by Mrs. Williver at 8:17pm the Stillwater Township Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 and 10:4-13 that said public body hold a closed session for the purpose of discussing Personnel it is expected that the minutes taken of this closed session will be made public when the reason for confidentiality no longer exists. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Motion made by Mrs. Frey, second by Mrs. Valeich at 8:44 p.m. to come out of executive session and return to public session. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mrs. Williver and second by Mrs. Valeich, to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,



René Metzgar
Business Administrator/Board Secretary