

April 28, 2025

The Stillwater Township Board of Education met on April 28, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Stillwater School All Purpose Room for a Regular 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. The 2025-2026 advertised budget appeared in the New Jersey Herald on April 24, 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, Mr. DeGroat, Mrs. Frey, Mrs. Valeich, Mr. Franek, Mrs. Voris, and Mrs. Thibault.

Absent: Mrs. Kraft.

Also present were William Kochis, Superintendent, René Metzgar, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, Marissa Cramer, Principal/Supervisor of CST and Special Education/Basic Skills, and members of the public.

BOARD BUSINESS

1. Superintendent Search Update- Mrs. Galante provided an update on our search:
 - Superintendent Employment advertisement was posted, we have begun to collect resumes.
 - The personnel committee has completed the interim superintendent interviews. The contract was sent to the county office for review and approval. We anticipate approving the interim contract at our May board meeting.
 - Community Input Session was held tonight at 6:00 pm
 - Staff Input session will be held on Wednesday.
 - Stakeholder Survey was sent out via our one call email system, as well as posted on Facebook, provided to the Township, and posted on our school website.
 - There is a special tab on our school website that will have the most updated information as we progress through the search.
2. Regionalization Study Steering Committee Update- Mrs. Galante provided an update on the first meeting. We met at Kittatinny, and the consultants conducting the study had provided a presentation explaining the process. They ensured the group this was not to force us into regionalization, rather to look at all opportunities, including share service. The study is expected to take several months.

That the following Board Business resolutions be approved:

1. Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from March 24, 2025.
2. Motion to approve the Special Board of Education meeting minutes from April 1, 2025.

3. Motion to approve the Special Board of Education meeting minutes from April 7, 2025.

Moved By: Mr. Franek **Seconded By:** Mrs. Valeich

Voice Vote: Mrs. Galante-Aye; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Aye; Mr. Franek-Aye; Mrs. Frey-Aye to #1 & #2 Abstain #3; Mrs. Kraft-Absent; Mrs. Thibault- Aye to #1 Abstain to #2 & #3; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motions carried.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Kochis reported on the following items:

- Kittatinny Activity Night- Thank you Mrs. Earley & Mr. Tiberi.
- Unsung Hero Ceremony- Congratulations Logan Day
- Superintendent Roundtable Award Ceremony- Congratulation Kaylee Moss
- PreK Parent Night- Thank you to our PreK Team & Mrs. Cramer
- Regional Parent Night with Dr. Koss- Thank you to Mrs. Cramer
- QSAC Visit

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Mrs. Galante thanked the board for all their hard work with everything that is currently going on. She really appreciates everyone stepping up.

Mrs. Galante also thanked Mrs. Metzgar for all her hard work throughout this superintendent search process to ensure things run smoothly.

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. ***

None.

ACTION ITEMS:

PERSONNEL

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

1. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve attached professional days. (attachment)
2. Motion to approve maternity leave for employee #956 beginning on or about May 29, 2025 with the intent to return on or about December 15, 2025. This leave includes 12 weeks covered by FMLA & NJFLA and 5 weeks of extended leave not covered by FMLA or NJFLA.
3. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the following graduate classes, as per SEA contract:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title of Course</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Reimbursement</u>
Maureen Riva	Special Education Law	6/30/25-8/24/25	\$1,737	Centenary University	No, As per SEA Contract
Maureen Riva	Comparative Systems	5/1/25-6/24/25	\$1,737	Centenary University	No, As per SEA Contract

Moved By: Mr. DeGroat **Seconded By:** Mrs. Frey

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

POLICY

-None.

EDUCATION & CURRICULUM

That the following Education & Curriculum resolution be approved:

1. Motion to approve the extended school year summer program from July 7, 2025 - July 31, 2025 (4 days per week) and advertise for the following anticipated positions:

1	Preschool with Disabilities Teacher
5	Special Ed Teachers
5	Paraprofessional
1	Preschool Paraprofessional
2	Bus Aides
1	Nurse
1	Speech Therapist
1	School Social Worker (10 days)

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

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

BUILDING & GROUNDS

1. Mrs. Metzgar provided an update on the following Building & Grounds item:
-PTA Shed

That the following Building & Grounds resolutions be approved:

2. Motion to approve revised building and use calendar for April 2025. (attachment)
3. Motion to approve building and use calendar for May 2025. (attachment)

Moved By: Mr. Franek **Seconded By:** Mrs. Williver

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

TRANSPORTATION

1. Emergency Bus Evacuation Drill Report

Bus Evacuation Drill Report #2

School Name: Stillwater Elementary School

Date: April 17, 2025

Time 8:25am - 8:30am

Location: Front Parking Lot

Participants: All Prek-6 Students who are transported to and from school

Supervisor of Drill: Dr. William Kochis

BUDGET & FINANCE

PUBLIC HEARING 2025-2026 BUDGET PRESENTATION

2025-2026 Budget Presented by Dr. Kochis & Mrs. Metzgar

Presented by Dr. Kochis & Mrs. Metzgar- Reviewed 2025-2026 school highlights, introduced proposed 2025-2026 budget with detailed revenues and expenditures. Focused on program changes, building projects, state aid, and tax impact. The presentation is attached to the minutes.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON 2025-2026 BUDGET

*This public session is designed for members of the public to speak on items regarding the 2025-2026 Budget.. 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. ***

-Darlene Scarince- Middleville Road, Stillwater- Asked if we knew the number of households in Stillwater. Also asked about the number of taxpayers. She also asked if we had to cut everything, what would we keep? Mrs. Scarince also asked about the health curriculum.

-Richard Kelsky- Cedar Ridge Road, Stillwater- Concerned that the website does not provide enough information. Also concerned of the public not being aware of the budget. He also asked Mrs. Metzgar to explain the tax levy, the cap, and the various percentages. He also asked about the maintenance reserve fund. He also asked how we compare for cost per pupil to the state and the area.

-Tom Scarince- Middleville Road, Stillwater- Questioned the Preschool Program, felt it was not necessary and should be cut.

-Cody Castner- Fairview Lake Road, Stillwater- Asked if he could have a copy of the slideshow. Questioned if we know the reason why students are attending charter school.

-Karen Thibault- Board Member- Asked Mrs. Metzgar to clarify the funds going into our reserve accounts for the public.

-Courtney Delaney- Old School House Road, Stillwater- Asked if the budget included additional CST members and if it is being considered due to the increase in special education programs.

1. Motion to Adopt the 2025-2026 School Budget

WHEREAS, the tentative budget was approved by the Board of Education on March 10, 2025, and no changes were required for the adoption of the final 2025-2026 budget;

WHEREAS, general fund expenditures in the amount of \$47,838 for local contribution to PEA funds have been appropriated to different general fund expense accounts;

NOW THEREFORE BE ITRESOLVED to adopt the 2025-2026 school district budget as follows:

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following GENERAL FUND tax levy be approved to support the 2025-2026 budget:

General Fund Tax Levy \$5,924,794

BE IT FURTHER 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.

BE IT FURTHER 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.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that included in line 630, Budgeted Withdrawal from Maintenance Reserve is \$80,000 for parking lot repairs and general maintenance costs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED as per N.J.A.C 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 2025-2026 budget is \$10,000.

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-Aye; Mr. Franek-Aye; Mrs. Frey-Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Absent; Mrs. Thibault-Aye; Mrs. Valeich-Aye; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motion carried.

That the following Budget & Finance resolutions be approved:

2. Motion to approve the following checks from March 25, 2025-April 28, 2025 as attached: (attachment)

Account	Check Numbers	Amount
Funds 10, 11, 12, 20	30076-30130, N0331, N0402, N0407, N0415	\$644,262.63
Capital Reserve	N/A	\$0
Student Activities	6697	\$52.00
Cafeteria	2738, N0304	\$33,566.97
Grand Total		\$677,881.60

3. Motion to approve the attached list of purchase orders over \$1,000 for the 2024-2025 school year. (attachment)
4. Motion to approve monthly travel as attached. (attachment)
5. Motion to authorize the return of unused funds of \$8,543.82 to the Maintenance Reserve account from the repairs of the storm drain pipe and septic.
6. Motion to purchase the following chromebooks, laptops, and computers from Dell Technologies, (NASPO Cooperative Pricing-Computer Equipment):
55 Chromebooks- \$24,644.40- Funded through REAP Grant 100%
19 Desktops- \$19,639.81- Funded through REAP Grant 29%, General Fund 71%
5 Laptops- \$4,771.05- Funded through general fund 100%
7. Motion to approve the submission of grant application for the 2025 Safety Grant Program through the New Jersey Schools Insurance Group's ERIC WEST Subfund for the purposes described in the application, in the amount of \$2,000 for the period July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.
8. Motion to accept the award amount of \$89,000 for the FY2025 Local Recreation Improvement Grant for the walking path at Stillwater School.
9. Motion to accept 3 gift cards for US Games from the American Heart Association Kids Heart Challenge for a total amount of \$700 to be used on physical education equipment.
10. Motion to accept the donation of the latest edition of the NJ Audubon magazine for total value of \$84.90.

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

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

LEGISLATION

None.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Mrs. Voris reported on the following community relations:

- Applications are available for Miss Stillwater, Little Miss & Mister, and Junior Mr. & Miss on the Township website.
- Stillwater Rec is looking for volunteers to assist on Stillwater Day.
- Garage Sale weekend- May 17th & 18th.
- PTA Son celebration- May 16th
- Benefit fundraiser for the Justus/Crane family- May 3rd
- Kittatinny football & cheer registration-open until May 31st

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Board member required training- Due December 31, 2025
2. Upcoming Sussex County School Boards Meeting:
 - May 6, 2025- Hybrid Meeting, Newton Country Club, Topic: County Teacher of the Year and Celebrations.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Cafeteria Pricing discussion for 2025-2026
2. Teacher Appreciation Week
3. Thank you dinner for Will
4. Meet & Greet was held on April 26th at the firehouse

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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*for the record. ***Members of the public are requested to keep their comments to a maximum of 5 minutes. ***

-Kaitlyn Hammerle- Millbrook Road, Stillwater- Apologized she missed the beginning of the meeting, but asked what the Regionalization steering committee report was.

-Richard Kelsky-Cedar Ridge Road, Stillwater- Expressed we should advertise the budget differently and change the budget newsletter.

-Dave Manser- Township Liaison- Asked the board the process to use the parking lot for the Bicentennial celebration on June 7th.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by Mrs. Williver, second by Mrs. Frey at 8:36 pm 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 Student Privacy, Legal Matters, & Superintendent Evaluation 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.

Mrs. Cramer was excused from the meeting at 8:43 pm

Mrs. Thibault was excused from the meeting at 8:44 pm

Dr. Kochis was excused from the meeting at 8:50 pm

Mrs. Thibault was invited back into executive session at 8:50 pm

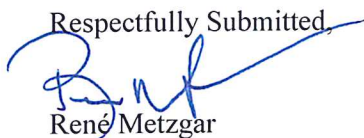
Mrs. Metzgar was excused from the meeting at 8:50 pm

Motion made by Mr. DeGroat, second by Mrs. Thibault at 9:00 p.m. to come out of executive session and return to public session. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Mr. DeGroat and second by Mrs. Valeich, to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 p.m. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,



René Metzgar

Business Administrator/Board Secretary