

**The Somerset Hills School District
 Regular Meeting Agenda - October 15, 2025
 Executive Session - 6:30 pm
 Regular Public Meeting - 7:30 pm
 Bernards High School - Community Room**

Call to Order & Welcome

Board President Mrs. Frenda called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Roll Call

Present:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Mr. Baker | Mrs. Gomez |
| Ms. Ballard | Mrs. Hoppe |
| Ms. Clark-Emery | Mrs. Santoro |
| Ms. Cooper | Mrs. Wry |
| Ms. Gils | Mrs. Frenda |

Absent: none.

Also Present:

- Dr. Brian Brotschul, Superintendent
- Dr. Coleen Butler, Assistant Superintendent
- Mr. Richard Liguori, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Board Norms

Before a Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arrive on time and prepared (read agenda and all attachments, including committee minutes in advance). ● Understand the placement of items on the agenda and understand why. ● Observe the board chain of command and respect the distinction between the role of the superintendent and the board. ● Understand what our role as members of the board is, including what items are executive session discussions versus public meeting discussions. ● Be problem solvers by working through issues and seeking advice and clarity from fellow board members and NJSBA if there are points of concern or contention.
During a Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No active use of phones in executive sessions or at the board table. ● Why speaking/why not? ● Value all voices; everyone has a chance to respond while being respectful of others. ● Non-repetition of issues/debate by the same individual until all have had the opportunity to speak.

- Signal to the board president to speak, the board president acknowledges the next speaker to allow uninterrupted opinions with time in mind.
- No surprises to the board or administration.

After a Meeting

- Support the outcomes determined by the majority while ensuring that minority voices are acknowledged.
- Abide by your responsibilities as a board member and be respectful of administrative and board time constraints.
- Be dedicated to supporting and attending school functions.
- Strive to develop professionally as individual board members and as a Board.
- Remember that students are always at the center of our decisions.

District Goals

2025-2026 District Goals

- **Academic**
 - Show progress in decreasing achievement gaps by advancing academic performance through increased support in areas of instruction for academic subgroups. Evaluate progress annually using all available assessment data.
 - Identify staff to leverage existing education by assessing interest in obtaining further certifications to expand available dual enrollment and career and technical education (CTE) student course offerings.
- **Facilities**
 - To prioritize planning for STEM/Robotics/CTE curriculum, develop a prioritized long-range facility plan and cost estimates.
- **Community Integration**
 - To support the belief that every community member is a stakeholder, develop 2-3 avenues to expand community connectivity and engage with all community members to communicate district outcomes and opportunities for further engagement with those residents with and without school-aged children.
- **Culture & Climate / Social Emotional Learning**
 - Identify and implement tools and mechanisms to establish a baseline understanding of student and staff experience in Somerset Hills School District to develop a future strategic plan to enhance workplace and school culture, climate, and social-emotional learning.

Executive Session

Ms. Cooper made a motion to go to Executive Session at 6:34 pm. Ms. Gils seconded.

WHEREAS the “Open Public Meetings Act” (Chapter 231 Laws of 1975) authorizes a public body to

exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which specified topics are to be discussed under circumstances where the public consideration of such topics will clearly endanger the public, or where the personal privacy or guaranteed rights of individuals whose activities or affairs are to be discussed would be clearly in danger of unwarranted invasions, and

WHEREAS the matters about to be presented for discussion clearly meet the “circumstances” test of such Act:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education of Somerset Hills now adjourns its public session to reconvene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the following: Student Matters, Negotiations, Personnel, and Litigation.

And, be it further,

RESOLVED that the discussion in Executive Session be disclosed when the Board’s consideration of the subject matter has been closed, or that such matter does not adversely affect the rights of prospective, current, or past public officers, or personnel of the Board, unless such individuals have in writing requested the disclosures of such discussion at a public meeting and provided such public disclosure will no longer clearly endanger the public interest.

Ms. Ballard made a motion to return to Public Session at 7:28 pm. Ms. Cooper seconded.

Pledge of Allegiance

Report of the Superintendent

1. Student Reports
 - a. BMS report provided by Julie Calvert and R.J. Donado
 - b. BHS report provided by Nolan Baker and Sophia Fazel-Sarjui

2. Recognition of Anakh Sawhney

A Resolution honoring **Anakh Sawhney** for her vision, effort, and unwavering dedication towards service to the community, locally, nationally, and abroad;

WHEREAS, the Somerset Hills Board of Education gives special honor and commendation to those who volunteer their time and talents to help others;

WHEREAS, **Anakh Sawhney** is part of the Bernards High School community and serves as an inspiration to her peers and staff members alike;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Somerset Hills Board of Education that: The members of the Board of Education hereby commend **Anakh Sawhney** for taking the initiative to create *Rice Kids*, as well as to develop it into a large-scale organization, while spreading awareness about the issues of food insecurity, poverty, and lack of education for children around the globe.

When the Somerset Hills Board of Education adjourns this day, it does so in honor of the achievements earned by **Anakh Sawhney**. The Board of Education Secretary is directed to have this Resolution reflected in the permanent minutes of the Somerset Hills Board of Education on this 15th day of October 2025.

Samantha Frenda
Board of Education President

Brian B. Brotschul, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

3. Recognition of Reagan Panik:

A Resolution honoring **Reagan Panik** for planning and coordinating efforts to bring resources and excitement to bilingual youth;

WHEREAS, the Somerset Hills Board of Education gives special honor and commendation to those who volunteer their time and talents to help others;

WHEREAS, **Reagan Panik** is part of the Bernards High School community and serves as an inspiration to her peers and staff members alike;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Somerset Hills Board of Education that: The members of the Board of Education hereby commend **Reagan Panik** for her community service to the students at Bedwell Elementary School through fundraising, constructing a Little Free Library, and leading a book club to motivate and support young readers.

When the Somerset Hills Board of Education adjourns this day, it does so in honor of the achievements earned by **Reagan Panik**. The Board of Education Secretary is directed to have this Resolution reflected in the permanent minutes of the Somerset Hills Board of Education on this 15th day of October 2025.

Samantha Frenda
Board of Education President

Brian B. Brotschul, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

4. Superintendent Report: Dr. Brotschul raised awareness of several timely and pertinent District issues, including updates on Referendum 2026 Community Forums, School Calendars for 2026-27 and 2027-28, and Matters of School Climate.

Public Comments for Actionable Agenda Items

- A. Christa Reudy - discussed women’s wrestling coach position.
- B. Seeing no one else from the public, Mrs. Santoro moved to close public comments. Ms. Cooper seconded. All voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resolved, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education approve the Public Input & Action and Executive meeting minutes for September 17, 2025.

Mrs. Hoppe moved to approve, and Mrs. Wry seconded.

The minutes were approved by a roll call vote of 9-0-1. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, and Mrs. Frenda. Abstain: Mrs. Gomez.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

A. Committee Report & Discussion - Mrs. Frenda gave the report on behalf of Mr. Baker. The Committee met on September 30, 2025. The following items were discussed:

- We are undertaking a demographic study refresh based on current planning board movement across the municipalities based on projects that have gone through & received approval for development.
- Audit Update - The auditors have completed their in-house work and very preliminary exit conferences have taken place, despite much more audit work to still be done. As outlined in an action item in last year's audit, Student Activities accounts have been reconciled down to the penny. We are now planning and organizing to ensure that accounts all stay in good standing and reconciled appropriately. There is the possibility of creating a stipend Custodian of Student Activities position to oversee this work.
- Former Athletic Lights - Youth Mountaineers football program asked about the district's portable lights for use at their practices on the grass fields. An agreement will be drawn up for them to receive the donation of the equipment.
- Spectrometer Diagnosis & Donation - An offer has been made for free service of existing BHS science department spectrometers. In return for the service the district would donate to the provider a spectrometer that has completely aged out of use for the district.
- Co-Op Pricing System - Through Ed Services of Morris County we are considering joining their Ed Data program which would allow for a broader swath of purchasing power for the district and would centralize vendor ordering across the district at a savings. The cost to join would be \$7800/year for licensing and to have access to their product.
 - At an additional cost of \$2100/year we can have access to work, materials, & maintenance through Ed Services as well. This is outlined in action item #15 on the agenda under Business Operations..
- Director of Operations Stipend - We discussed the stipend presently associated with this position for Custodial Foreman duties. The way the resolution was originally written terminated on June 30th so action item #14 under Personnel will retroactively continue pay starting on July 1st, 2025.
- BHS Math Lab - The Math Lab will be reinstated for a total annual stipend cost of \$5,000.
- RFP For Broker of Record - We are getting ready to go out to RFP for our Health Benefits Broker of record. A best practice we have been endeavoring upon for all of our service providers over the last several years.
- Baseball/Softball Facilities - We will be replacing the softball field batting cage as it is not up to the appropriate standard of use. We also discussed inquiries regarding Disabled Access to bleachers/seatings on the fields. It was indicated that no modifications planned at this time and that there is a ramp that does allow for access at this time.
- Donation of Wrestling Mats - The District will be accepting the donation of two gym floor mats for wrestling from the Westwood Regional School District at an estimated value of \$1,500. For reference this is reflected in action item #13a under Business Operations.

Discussion - Mrs. Hoppe followed up on the ramps. Mrs. Santoro provided feedback and history. Ms. Clark-Emery asked if the Board could revisit the issue. Dr. Brotschul indicated that the engineer of record would be engaged.

B. Action Items: Ms. Cooper moved items #1-19, Mr. Baker seconded.

Items #1-10, 12-19 were approved by roll call vote of 10-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Gomez, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda.

Item #11 was approved by roll call vote of 9-0-1. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda. Abstain: Mrs. Gomez.

1. Board Secretary & Treasurer Reports & Board Certification*

WHEREAS, the Board Secretary has received the Reports of the Secretary and Treasurer for the month of September showing the following balances:

FUND	Board Secretary Cash Balance (1)	Treasurer Cash Balance (2)
(10) General Fund	\$11,011,786.07	\$11,011,786.07
(20) Special Revenue Fund	\$19,323.64	\$19,323.64
(30) Capital Projects Fund	-	-
(40) Debt Service Fund	\$211,665.22	\$211,665.22
Total Government Funds	\$11,242,774.93	\$11,242,774.93

(1) From Secretary's Report (2) From Treasurer's Report

WHEREAS in compliance with N.J.A.C.6A: 23-2.1(c)3 the secretary has certified that, as of the date of the report(s), no budgetary line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district board of education, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the Board of Education accepts the above referenced report and certifications and orders that they be attached to and made part of the record of this meeting, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, in compliance with N.J.A.C.6A: 23-3.11(c) 4, the Board of Education certifies that, after review of the secretary's monthly financial reports (appropriation section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of its knowledge, no major account or fund has been overexpended in violation of N.J.A.C.6A: 23-2.11(b), and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the year.

2. Approve 2025-2026 Budget Transfers*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education approves the attached list of budget transfers for September 2025.

3. Payment of Bills*

WHEREAS, the Board Secretary has presented attached Final September 2025 check register with the recommendation that the checks be paid, and Now, therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the following bills be paid and an itemized list be filed with the minutes of this meeting:

FUND	
(10) General Fund	\$4,882,977.18
(20) Special Revenue Fund	\$23,586.46
(30) Capital Projects Fund	-
(40) Debt Service Fund	\$590,635.00
(60) Cafeteria Fund	\$90,545.50
(90) Agency Fund	\$1,230,018.35
TOTAL	\$6,817,762.49

4. Payment of Bills*

WHEREAS, the Board Secretary has presented attached October 2025 check register with the recommendation that the checks be paid, and Now, therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the following bills be paid and an itemized list be filed with the minutes of this meeting:

FUND	
(10) General Fund	\$815,490.79
(20) Special Revenue Fund	\$11,500.00
(30) Capital Projects Fund	-
(40) Debt Service Fund	-
(60) Cafeteria Fund	-
(90) Agency Fund	-
TOTAL	\$826,990.79

5. Approve Special Education Schools*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following schools for the 2025-2026 school year and extended school year.

	Student ID#	School	Location	Cost
a	8027497417	Banyan School	Fairfield, NJ	\$49,306.02 (Prorated)
b	9263467874	Midland School	Branchburg, NJ	\$107,000.00 (Prorated)

6. Approve Parent Transportation Contracts*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following parent transportation contracts for the 2025-2026 school year and extended school year.

	Student ID#	Contract No.	Location	Cost
a	8027497417	CK-2526	Fairfield, NJ	\$11,544.53

7. Approve Creature Comfort Pet Therapy Agreement*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve Creature Comfort Pet Therapy Agreement to provide therapy pet visits for students for the 2025-2026 school year, at an amount not to exceed \$1,000.00.

8. Approve Qualtrics Agreement*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the K-12 Enterprise Management and Technical Ticketing software licenses from Qualtrics for the 2025-2026 school year, at an amount not to exceed \$25,000.00.

9. Approve Greater Somerset County YMCA Agreement*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve an agreement with the Greater Somerset County YMCA to provide use of facilities, for the purpose of BHS swim team practices and meets for the 2025-2026 school year, at an

amount not to exceed \$11,000.00.

10. Bus Evacuation Drills*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Bus Evacuation Drill for the 2025-2026 school year. Reports for drills are on file in the Business Office:

	School	Date
a	Bernards High School	9/12/2025

11. Bus Evacuation Drills

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Bus Evacuation Drills for the 2025-2026 school year. Reports for drills are on file in the Business Office:

	School	Date
a	Bedwell Elementary School	9/26/2025, 10/3/2025
b	Bernardsville Middle School	10/10/2025

12. Somerset County Vocational & Technical Schools*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, authorizes the Send/Receive Tuition Agreements with Somerset County Vocational & Technical Schools for the sending of students to Somerset County Vocational & Technical Schools for the 2025-2026 school year.

13. Accept Donations*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following donations:

	Organization	Purpose	School	Amount
a	Westwood Regional School District	(2) Gym floor mats for wrestling	BHS	\$1,500.00
b	CIC for Prevention & Recovery (formerly known as Community in Crisis)	Stipend for CIC club advisor Lauren Cava	BHS	\$1,500.00

14. Approve Independent Auditor To Prepare A41, A42 and Resource Room Actual Costs Per Pupil*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve PFK O'Connor Davies as the independent auditor to prepare the A41, A42 and Resource Room Actual Costs Per Pupil from the 2024-2025 school year at a cost of \$8,000, to be shared with Bedminster Board of Education. The Somerset Hills Board of Education will be responsible for \$4,000.

15. Approve Cooperative Pricing System Agreement - Educational Services Commission of Morris County*

WHEREAS N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11 (5) authorizes contracting units to enter into Cooperative Pricing Agreements; and

WHEREAS the Educational Services Commission of Morris County, hereinafter referred to as the “Lead Agency,” has offered voluntary participation in a Cooperative Pricing System known as the “Educational Cooperative Pricing System” for the purchase of work, materials, and supplies; and

WHEREAS the Somerset Hills School District within the County of Somerset, New Jersey, desires to participate in the Educational Cooperative Pricing System.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, as follows:

As directed by N.J.S.A. 18A-18A-11 et seq. and pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11 (5), the Board President is hereby authorized to enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the Lead Agency.

The Lead Agency shall advertise for and receive bids from vendors who will make school supplies, equipment, and other related goods and services available to participating members of the said Cooperative Pricing System at the agreed upon price; and

The Lead Agency entering into contracts on behalf of the Somerset Hills School District shall be responsible for complying with the 54 provisions of the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A: 11-1 et seq.) and all other provisions of the revised statutes of the State of New Jersey.

Educational Data Services, Inc. will maintain and coordinate the district’s supply requirements and inclusion in the New Jersey Cooperative Pricing System.

The licensing and maintenance fee for the above New Jersey Cooperative Bid will be \$7,800 for services through June 30, 2026, which includes bulk supply purchases for the school year 2026-2027. Educational Data Services, Inc. guarantees the savings to be greater than the fee amount.

An additional fee for the Time and Material Bid Package Enrollment, covering skilled trades, maintenance services, athletic reconditioning, compliance services, and ancillary school-based services where applicable by county, will be \$1,225, prorated upon signing and through March 31, 2026. The program is renewable on April 1, 2026 with a rate of \$2,100.

16. Approve Cooperative Pricing System Agreement - Monmouth-Ocean Educational Services Commission*

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11 (5) authorizes contracting units to establish a Cooperative Pricing System and to enter into Cooperative Pricing Agreements for its administration; and

WHEREAS, the Monmouth-Ocean Educational Services Commission (MOESC), hereinafter referred to as the “Lead Agency” has offered voluntary participation in a Cooperative Pricing System for the purchase of goods and services;

WHEREAS, the governing body of the Somerset Hills School District, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, pursuant to N.J.A.C 5:34-7.6 (a), duly considered participation in a Cooperative Pricing System for the provision and performance of goods and services;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, as follows::

Pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(5) and N.J.A.C 5:34-7.6 (a), the Somerset Hills School District is hereby authorized to enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with Monmouth-Ocean Educational Services Commission (MOESC), the Lead Agency.

The Lead Agency shall comply with the Public School Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq.) and all other provisions of the revised statutes of the State of New Jersey.

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage.

It is agreed that each participating contracting unit shall pay the Lead Agency an annual fee of \$0.00 as its estimated prorated share of the administrative costs incurred by the Lead Agency. MOESC will not charge any administrative fee for cooperative purchasing services to contracting units.

17. Approve Contract with PowerSchool*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a contract with PowerSchool for the use of their Naviance products at Bernards High School, for the period December 15, 2025 through December 14, 2026, at an amount not to exceed \$4,400.00.

18. Approve Contracts with Interstate Waste*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve contracts with Interstate Waste Services for the period October 15, 2025 through October 14, 2026, at an amount not to exceed \$58,000.00.

19. Approve Disposal of Old Assets*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the disposal of the following unusable assets at Bernards High School:

	Item	Quantity
a	Worklite Stage & Studio Lighting Units	40
b	Panels of Light Fixtures, each containing 15 Lights	6
c	Eastern Acoustic Works Speakers - model # (WT)10279	5

C. Business Operations Old Business / New Business - none.

CURRICULUM

A. Committee Report & Discussion - Ms. Cooper gave the report. The Committee met on October 1, 2025. The following items were discussed:

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS AND DECISIONS/CONCLUSIONS REACHED:

1. Dual enrollment and Virtual Academy (Jaime Walker)

- Dr. Walker joined us to discuss funding options for students on free/reduced lunches who hope to receive dual enrollment credit for Seton Hall dual enrollment courses.
- Unlike other partner institutions offering dual enrollment opportunities, Seton Hall does not offer reductions in fees for students receiving free/reduced lunches
- To help these students participate in Seton Hall dual enrollment, Dr. Walker proposed using funding from the Virtual Academy budget to cover the dual enrollment fees. Support for students enrolled in Virtual Academy courses will not be affected.
- The committee unanimously supported this proposition and thanked Dr. Walker for bringing this issue to our attention.

2. BHS math lab

- We discussed and fully supported offering a math lab that provides extra math support to students. Appointments are not needed; students can just show up to the lab, which usually occurs right after school.
- The committee also supported offering the math lab, at least occasionally, before school to accommodate students who have after-school commitments.

3. Update on changes in NJSLA testing (Olga Edgerton & Jeremy Schwarz)

- Since the last meeting, Dr. Edgerton and Mr. Schwarz attended training sessions on the new NJSLA assessments and joined us to discuss what they learned.
- First, Mr. Schwarz reviewed the hardware and technology requirements for NJSLA testing.
 - To be used for testing all Chromebooks will need to run the latest OS.
 - Since the district is 1:1 for devices in K-8, the district acquired 50 new devices to use in case extra devices are needed in these grades.
 - For BHS, the district already has 280 devices. To accommodate the ~400 students who will need devices for testing, we have purchased 250 more devices, 50 of which will be set aside for emergencies.
 - Mr. Schwarz also described the successful testing of the network he conducted to ensure that the district has the necessary bandwidth to accommodate the simultaneous testing of so many students. The network successfully passed all tests, indicating that the connection of up to 3000 devices can be supported at one time.
- Dr. Edgerton then discussed what she learned regarding the NJSLA field testing that will be conducted at all 3 schools between October 27th and November 14th.
 - Unlike the test in the spring, the field test will not be adaptive.
 - The results from this test will be used to sequence the questions by difficulty for testing in the spring.
 - Generally, students will undergo 60 minutes of testing in reading, 120 minutes of testing in writing, and 60 minutes of testing in math.
- We also briefly discussed the benefits and limitations of moving to a 1:1 technology strategy at BHS. Generally, the committee agreed that this change is probably not needed at this time, but we can revisit it in the future.

4. Practices developed in response to the Mahmoud v. Taylor ruling

- In response to a board member's request, Dr. Butler repeated the district's updated practices related to the mechanisms for families to opt their children out of specific texts due to religious beliefs at Bedwell.
- The committee did discuss these mechanisms at our meeting in August. These mechanisms were also reported out during that month's public meeting and summarized in our Board update. Just as a reminder:
 - Prior to receiving access to their student's schedules in August 2025, each family was required to acknowledge receipt of information regarding their ability to opt their student out of instruction due to strongly held religious beliefs.
 - All Genesis forms are synced with Google translate.
 - Since it was anticipated that Bedwell might have the largest number of parents who might use this opt-out procedure, Dr. Butler developed a plan for Bedwell teachers to send home advanced notice of read-alouds, which might not be visible in the curriculum.
 - This advance notice will be distributed through school newsletters and the weekly Friday Folder.
- To create these mechanisms, Dr. Butler met with our attorneys and worked with Bedwell administrators and teachers.
 - The entire administrative team met with the Board's attorney during their summer admin retreat for an update on legal matters including Mahmoud.
 - A plan was developed and shared with teachers on their first day of professional development.
 - The form that was sent to all parents/guardians was shared with the Board's attorney in advance of being sent out via Genesis.
- At the time of our committee meeting, Dr. Butler reported that she had recently been to a county meeting where none of the schools present started the year with a plan in place as they were waiting for more clarification/direction from the State.
 - Note that the NJ DOE has provided no guidance related to this issue.
 - The committee is proud of and appreciates Dr. Butler's leadership in this area.
- The majority of the committee fully supported the district's efforts related to these procedures, although one member believed the district needed to be more proactive in identifying texts that might be concerning to some families. All other members of the committee disagreed with this opinion.
- In fact, most of the committee was concerned that taking additional steps to accommodate the court's ruling might be associated with significant risks:
 - First, we may no longer be compliant with State mandates regarding diversity and inclusion.
 - Second, additional steps may be too logistically challenging for our teachers/administrators, increasing the likelihood that books including diverse characters and family types may be removed from our schools, making it less likely that the district follows the core principle in childhood education of "windows and mirrors." Children must be able to see themselves and others in the books they read.

5. 9/11 lesson update

- The committee also briefly discussed a concern related to the BHS social studies curriculum, which has since been resolved.

6. For the good of the order

- No other topics were discussed.

DECISIONS

1. No concerns were raised regarding PD or field trip requests.

Discussion - Ms. Gils asked about advanced notice through newsletters and Friday folders. Dr. Butler indicated teachers send to parents via email, print, or both methods. Ms. Gils questioned the timing. Dr. Butler said notice goes out regarding next week, next 2 weeks, etc. Ms. Gils said if monthly, then it should detail when within the month, while noting notice should be weekly. She asked if parental notifications were received, and Dr. Butler indicated that they are. Ms. Gils indicated that there should be a policy, and Dr. Butler indicated this takes time with the development and required two readings, and that the District did what was required prior to the start of the school year. Ms. Gils questioned the administration vs the Board to remedy this. Dr. Brotschul said that the administration often acts on behalf of the Board, and that in this instance, they developed procedures consistent with the Mahmoud case, asserted authority, and consulted with Legal. Ms. Gils indicated it was the Board's "lane" to act on this. Dr. Brotschul indicated questions brought up in committee were answered satisfactorily, and that there has been a comprehensive effort to inform the families. Dr. Butler indicated the 9 books from the Mahmoud case are not in our libraries or in our curriculum and assured that all books to be read are communicated home. Mrs. Hoppe asked the Board attorney, Ms. Oduyela, for more information on what was handed down from the Supreme Court, and that she believes the Board has gone above & beyond in this area. Ms. Oduyela indicated we do not necessarily know how other districts are handling this, as it is new since June. Ms. Gils described the September meeting, the District letter regarding this matter, and what her request had been regarding this. Ms. Oduyela looked for actual Supreme Court verbiage. Ms. Gils indicated the Supreme Court assigned this to the Board to notify and act. She asked that the Board rescind the superintendent's letter regarding this matter. Several indicated there was no parent letter and that information was circulated to the committee at that time. Ms. Cooper said this all was discussed at the August meeting and commended the administrative team. Ms. Gils indicated this was not her interpretation and that blanket notification was not allowed. Ms. Oduyela said that blanket notification was not in the decision. Ms. Gils continued that the Board does not need NJ DOE guidance and that Supreme Court rulings supersede state law. She again stated that a policy needs to be discussed and created. Ms. Gils made an analogy that if it were 1861, the majority would be fighting for the Confederacy. Mrs. Santoro asked for a point of order while keeping the conversation to the Curriculum committee agenda minutes. Mrs. Frenda asked that based on the point of order, and in discussion with the Board attorney, that comments about the Confederacy and state rights vs federal rights had strayed from the committee agenda minutes. Mrs. Santoro again asked that comments should pertain to Curriculum agenda items. Dr. Brotschul indicated there were five agenda items to be voted upon. Ms. Gils indicated she may ask questions as a member of the public. Ms. Oduyela asked what Ms. Gils wanted to do "tonight" at the public meeting. Ms. Gils asked to discuss it at the next committee meeting. Mrs. Santoro asked that an attorney be present for that meeting. Ms. Cooper said the Curriculum committee is not in favor of moving this topic to the Policy committee. Mrs. Frenda stated legal entities are still catching up regarding implementation and implications in NJ schools. She complimented the administration for acting in an expeditious and comprehensive manner. Dr. Brotschul said he interacts with policy advisors regularly and assured the Board that once anything further is released, it will be shared with all, as they are actively working on it. Ms. Gils again brought up federal law superseding state law. Mr. Baker called the question. Mr. Baker's motion was seconded by Mrs. Wry.

The item was approved by roll call vote of 10-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Gomez, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda.

B. Action Items: Ms. Cooper moved items #1-5, Mrs. Santoro seconded.

Items 2-5 were approved by roll call vote of 10-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Gomez, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda.

Item 1 was approved by roll call vote of 9-0-1. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda. Abstain: Mrs. Gomez.

1. Approve Professional Development/School Business

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following professional development/school business for the 2025-2026 school year:

	School	Name	Workshop/Conference/School Business	Date(s)	Est. Cost
a	BMS	Boudreau, Derek	Building Stronger, More Flexible Readers: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Fluency for Upper Grades, Grades 3-6	11/24/25, 1/30/26, 3/27/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
b	BMS	Chaffee, Salome	Field Trip Chaperone-Green Team	10/24/25	\$0
c	BMS	Clark, Michelle	Field Trip Chaperone-Green Team	10/24/25	\$0
d	BMS	Fritsche, Max	Close Reading, Writing about Reading, and Book Clubs, Grades 2-8	10/22/25, 11/19/25, 1/21/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
e	BMS	Froysland, Megan	Conquer Mathematics Workshop	2/12/26	\$200
f	BMS	Haenny, Alexandra	Conquer Mathematics Workshops	11/24/25	\$200
g	BMS	Jurgens, Allyssa	2026 NJ Music Educators State Conference	2/19/26, 2/20/26	\$0
h	BES	Lodato, Claire	Using Decodable Texts and Small Groups to Strengthen Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Comprehension, Grades K-2	1/8/26, 2/12/26, 3/12/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
i	BMS	Mahlik, Philip	NJ High School Baseball Coaches Association	10/17/25	\$40
j	BES	Mariani, Jessica	Building Stronger, More Flexible Readers: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Fluency for Upper Grades, Grades 3-6	11/24/25, 1/30/26, 3/27/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
k	BES	McCloskey, Heather	Speechpathology.com Online Webinars (2)	10/7/25, 12/9/25	\$0
l	BMS	McGovern, Danielle	Knowledge Building Through Read Aloud and Small Groups: Create and Curate Resources for Topics and Units with Fiction and Nonfiction Texts, Leverage Background Knowledge and Tools to Develop Vocabulary, Grades 4-8	11/3/25, 11/24/25, 2/3/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services

	School	Name	Workshop/Conference/School Business	Date(s)	Est. Cost
m	BMS	McMillan, Patricia	Support the Teaching and Learning of Spelling: Targeted Small Group Instruction to Support Feedback, Practice and Explicit Teaching, Grades 4-8	12/16/25, 1/20/26, 3/10/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
n	BES	McSpiritt, Kelly	Traumatic Loss Coalition: 22nd Annual Suicide Prevention Conference	12/4/25	\$116.11
o	BES	McSpiritt, Kelly	Understanding Dyslexia: Best Practices	10/21/25	\$100.34
p	BMS	O'Halloran, Annie	Conquer Mathematics Workshops	11/24/25	\$200
q	BES	Reed, Patrick	Building Stronger, More Flexible Readers: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Fluency for Upper Grades, Grades 3-6	11/24/25, 1/30/26, 3/27/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
r	BMS	Reilly, Kathryn	Conquer Mathematics Workshops	10/17/25, 11/19/25	\$470.78
s	BMS	Reilly, Kathryn	Field Trip Chaperone-Green Team	10/24/25	\$0
t	BES	Rice, Taylor	Tools of the Mind Training	1/15/26	\$750
u	BES	Roll, Jill	Occupationaltherapy.com Online Webinars (2)	TBD	\$0
v	BES	Seelig, Sophia	Building Stronger, More Flexible Readers: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Fluency for Upper Grades, Grades 3-6	11/24/25, 1/30/26, 3/27/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
w	BES	Strohman, Liz	NJ Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention	4/16/26, 4/17/26	\$355
x	BMS	Tresslar, Kristene	Knowledge Building Through Read Aloud and Small Groups: Create and Curate Resources for Topics and Units with Fiction and Nonfiction Texts, Leverage Background Knowledge and Tools to Develop Vocabulary, Grades 4-8	11/3/25, 11/24/25, 2/3/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
y	BES	Vitale, Shannon	Using Decodable Texts and Small Groups to Strengthen Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Comprehension, Grades K-2	1/8/26, 2/12/26, 3/12/26	part of Advancing Literacy contracted services
z	BMS	Weinstein, Julie	Conquer Mathematics Workshops	10/17/25, 11/19/25	\$447.18

2. Approve Professional Development/School Business*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following professional development/school business, for the 2025-2026 school year:

	School	Name	Workshop/Conference/School Business	Date(s)	Est. Cost
a	District	Barna, Lindsay	Literacy Leaders' Network Meeting	10/23/25	\$0
b	District	Barna, Lindsay	Rutgers Center for Literacy Development Speaker Series	2/12/26, 4/16/26	\$360
c	BHS	Bittner, Cassandra	Field Trip Chaperone-Anatomy Classes	1/16/26	\$0
d	District	Butler, Coleen	Greater Somerset County Association of Curriculum & Instruction Meetings	9/26/25, 10/24/25, 12/5/25, 1/23/26, 2/13/26, 3/27/26, 4/24/26, 5/29/26	\$0
e	District	Butler, Coleen	Attend Sheltered Instruction Protocol Training at Franklin School District	10/10/25, 10/30/25, 12/11/25	\$0
f	BHS	Cannon, Steven	Foreign Language Workshop: Comprehension-Based Learning	10/30/25	\$180.58
g	BHS	Chang, Newstein	Field Trip Chaperone-Anatomy Classes	1/16/26	\$0
h	BHS	Chedid, Christine	Field Trip Chaperone-Anatomy Classes	1/16/26	\$0
i	District	Cicenia, Amy	NJ Association for School Business Officials - Purchasing Basics	10/28/25	\$112.41
j	BHS	Ellis, Amanda	Higher Education Student Assistance Authority's School Counselor Workshop	10/16/25	\$0
k	BHS	Ellis, Amanda	Big 10 Academic Alliance New Jersey Counselor Event	10/10/25	\$0
l	BHS	Falletta, LuAnn	AP Calculus Roundtable	11/14/25	\$0
m	BHS	Hunkele, Heather	Garden State Scholastic Press Association Fall Press Day	10/27/25	\$157
n	BHS	Incedon, Cassie	Hot Issues in Special Education Law	11/10/25	\$195
o	BHS	Incedon, Cassie	Traumatic Loss Coalition: 22nd Annual Suicide Prevention Conference	12/4/25	\$147.58
p	District	Koransky, Jamie	Traumatic Loss Coalition: 22nd Annual Suicide Prevention Conference	12/4/25	\$116.58
q	BHS	LaPine, Matthew	Field Trip Chaperone-Madrigals	3/28/26	\$0
r	BHS	LaPine, Matthew	Field Trip Chaperone-Chorale	2/5/26	\$0

	School	Name	Workshop/Conference/School Business	Date(s)	Est. Cost
s	BHS	LaPine, Matthew	Field Trip Chaperone-Music Department	12/22/25	\$0
t	BHS	LaPine, Matthew	Field Trip Chaperone-Madrigals	12/17/25	\$0
u	BHS	LaPine, Matthew	Field Trip Chaperone-Choirs	5/22/26	\$0
v	BHS	LaPine, Matthew	Field Trip Chaperone-Madrigals & Chorale	5/20/26	\$0
w	BHS	Lavalle, Alexa	Hot Issues in Special Education Law	11/10/25	\$195
x	District	Liguori, Richard	NJ Association for School Business Officials - Building a Successful Budget	11/19/25	\$50
y	District	Liguori, Richard	OPRA Today and Tomorrow	11/5/25	\$50
z	District	Liguori, Richard	NJ Association for School Business Officials - Purchasing Basics	10/28/25	\$50
aa	BHS	Mathus, Peter	Field Trip Chaperone-Anatomy Classes	1/16/26	\$0
bb	BHS	O'Brien, Janice	Field Trip Chaperone-Journalism/Yearbook	10/27/25	\$0
cc	BHS	Pasqua, Jacki	Enhancing Spanish Language Instruction: New, Innovative Activities to Strengthen Your Students' Proficiency in Spanish	11/10/25	\$295
dd	BHS	Pasqua, Jacki	Rutgers University Multilingual Educator Fellowship Workshop	10/30/25	\$0
ee	District	Riccio, Frank	NJ Association of Designated Persons Quarterly Meeting	10/23/25, 1/22/26, 3/26/26, 5/28/26	\$0
ff	BHS	Richard, Rachael	National Council of Social Studies Annual Conference	12/4/25, 12/5/25	\$0
gg	BHS	Richard, Rachael	Field Trip Chaperone-Untold Histories	10/22/25	\$0
hh	BHS	Sosely, Anna	Fairleigh Dickinson University Fall High School Counselor Luncheon	11/18/25	\$0
ii	BHS	Stolarz, Lizabeth	Fairleigh Dickinson University Fall High School Counselor Luncheon	11/18/25	\$0
jj	BHS	Taesler, Stephen	Field Trip Chaperone-BHS Instrumental Music	3/20/26- 3/23/26	\$0
kk	BHS	Torres, Maiya	Field Trip Chaperone-Untold Histories	10/22/25	\$0
ll	BHS	Volosin, Lauren	Field Trip Chaperone-Tomorrow's Teachers	11/14/25	\$0
mm	BHS	Zangara, Tim	Field Trip Chaperone-Untold Histories	10/22/25	\$0

3. Rescind Professional Development/School Business*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, rescind the following professional development/school business, which was approved on August 27, 2025:

	School	Name	Workshop/Conference/School Business	Date(s)	Est. Cost
a	District	Catelli, Michael	Lead with Joy: NJ Principals & Supervisors Association/Foundation for Educational Administration/NJ Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development 2025 Fall Conference	10/16/25, 10/17/25	\$481

4. Approve Field Trips*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following field trips for the 2025-2026 school year:

	School	Trip	# of Students	# of Faculty	# of Chaperones
a	BHS	Disney World - Orlando Florida BHS Instrumental Music	75	8	0
b	BHS	Liberty Science Center - Jersey City, NJ Anatomy Classes	45	5	0
c	BHS	Bayonne High School - Bayonne, NJ AP Physics	24	1	1
d	BHS	Rutgers Busch Campus Center - Piscataway, NJ Journalism/Yearbook	20	2	0
e	BHS	Kean University - Union, NJ Tomorrow's Teachers	4	1	0
f	BHS	Bernards High School - Bernardsville, NJ Best Buddies	TBD	1	0

5. Amend 2025-2026 School Safety/School Climate Teams*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, amend the following School Safety Teams for 2025-2026:

Bedwell Elementary School
 Scott Wolfe– Principal
 Jasmine Akauola- Assistant Principal
 Megan Dooley- School Counselor
 Maureen Ziolkowski- Teacher
 Lee Eaton- Parent

Bernardsville Middle School

Lisa Garofalo- Principal
 Keith Koellhoffer- Assistant Principal
 Jaclyn Pasquarelli- Mental Health Counselor
 Phil Mahlik- Teacher
 Ayesha Failey- Parent

Bernards High School

Scott Neigel- Principal
 Michael Corbett- Assistant Principal
 Lauren Cava- Substance Awareness Coordinator
 Melissa Gomez- School Nurse
 Matt Bale-Peña- Teacher
 Suzie Stevinson- Parent
 Tori Resnick- School Counselor

C. Curriculum Old Business / New Business - Mrs. Gomez asked a clarifying question regarding the Math Labs. Dr. Butler indicated the purpose is to strengthen students or answer questions regarding classes they are currently taking. Mrs. Clark-Emery thanked Dr. Butler and the administration for their hard work on the discussed policy.

PERSONNEL

- A. Committee Report and Discussion: Ms. Ballard gave the report. The Committee met on September 30, 2025. The following items were discussed:
1. We discussed the recommendation of the hiring of an Interim Administrator for approximately 60-80 work days. Solid candidate, has relevant experience, comes well recommended and will be paid on a per diem basis.
 2. BHS Math Lab is being reinstated; \$5000 total to run the lab including stipends for multiple teachers.
 3. We we also went over pending leave of absence requests
 4. We discussed the Director of Operations stipend for the role of custodial foreman; this had been previously discussed but the stipend was never continued in the budget, so this is a correction.
 5. Dr. Brotschul proposed a change to the procedure for the Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Brotschul would give updates in October and January in Executive Session; all relevant info will be uploaded to the school boards site early, which would give Board members five weeks to complete the evaluation. There would be three meetings between the time the information was uploaded and the Board completing the evaluation.
 - a. The goal is to eliminate the need for special meetings; the work can be done in extended Executive sessions.
 - b. A committee member mentioned the possibility of using alternative evaluations. Dr. Brotschul said that he has used different evaluations in the past; we can investigate alternative evaluations.
 - c. The only requirement of statute is that the evaluation will be completed by June 30th, 2025.
 - d. Will revisit this in January to consider alternative methods for 2026-2027.

Discussion - none.

B. Action Items: Ms. Ballard moved items #1-18, Mr. Baker seconded.

Items 2, 4, 6, 9, 12-15, 17-18 were approved by roll call vote of 10-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Gomez, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda.

Items 1, 3, 5, 7-8, 10-11, 16 were approved by roll call vote of 9-0-1. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda. Abstain: Mrs. Gomez.

1. Accepts Resignation

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the resignation of the following employee:

	Employee	School	Position	Effective
a	Locatelli, Thomas	BMS	Special Education Paraprofessional PARA.DIST.RR.NA.08	10/10/25

2. Approve Salary Guide Level Advancement 2025-2026*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve salary guide level advancements for the following certificated staff for the 2025-2026 school year retroactive to September 1, 2025:

	Name	School	Assignment	Step	Current Level	New Level	New Salary
a	Ciocco, Jared	BHS	Latin	8-9	MA+15	MA+30	\$83,680
b	Gomez, Melissa	BHS	Nurse	10	BA	MA	\$80,150
c	Pair, Randall	BHS	English	14	BA	MA	\$89,500
d	Paulmeno, Ashley	BHS	Special Education	8-9	MA+30	MA+45	\$86,280
e	Stypolkowski, Emily	BHS	Special Education	8-9	MA	MA+15	\$81,130

3. Approve Salary Guide Level Advancement 2025-2026

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve salary guide level advancements for the following certificated staff for the 2025-2026 school year retroactive to September 1, 2025 (*longevity included):

	Name	School	Assignment	Step	Current Level	New Level	New Salary
a	Arce, Cassandra	BES	Special Education	10	MA+15	MA+30	\$85,400
b	Clark, Michelle	BMS	Special Education	10	BA	MA+15	\$82,850
c	Hall, Kristine*	BES	Elementary	21	MA+45	MA+60	\$118,800
d	Kartelias, Grace	BES	Elementary	10	MA	MA+15	\$82,850
e	Kimmel, Melissa	BMS	Literacy	11	MA+30	MA+45	\$90,050
f	Mahlik, Philip	BMS	Physical Education	4-5	BA	MA	\$75,390
g	McShane, Sarah	BES	Elementary	11	MA+30	MA+45	\$90,050
h	Mirando, Stephan	BES	Spanish	8-9	MA+30	MA+45	\$86,280
i	Palmieri, Jeremy	BES	Physical Education	10	MA+30	MA+45	\$88,000
j	Reilly, Kathryn	BMS	Special Education	4-5	BA	MA	\$75,390
k	Rice, Taylor	BES	PreSchool	8-9	MA	MA+15	\$81,130
l	Sakin, Jordan	BES	Special Education	6-7	MA	MA+15	\$79,535
m	Strohman, Elizabeth	BES	Speech Therapist	15-16	MA	MA+15	\$94,975

4. Amend Overloads*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, amend the following overloads for the 2025-2026 school year:

	Type of Support	Teacher	Term	Periods/ week	Salary	OVERLOAD Salary prorated
a	Special Education BHS	Paulmeno, Ashley	9/1/25 - 11/25/25	5	\$86,280 \$83,680	\$4,314.86 \$4,184.84
b	Special Education BHS	Stypolkowski, Emily	9/1/25 - 11/25/25	5	\$81,130 \$78,430	\$4,057.31 \$3,922.28
c	Latin/BHS	Ciocco, Jared	FY	5	\$83,680 \$81,130	\$13,949.46 \$13,524.37

5. Amend Overloads

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, amend the following overloads for the 2025-2026 school year:

	Type of Support	Teacher	Term	Periods/ week	Salary	OVERLOAD Salary prorated
a	Special Education/BMS	Weinstein, Julie	FY	5 3	\$73,745	\$12,293.29 \$4,917.32
b	Special Education/BMS	Clark, Michelle	FY	5	\$82,850 \$73,800	\$13,811.10 \$12,302.46
c	Special Education/BMS	Reilly, Kathryn	FY	5	\$75,390 \$69,040	\$13,811.10 \$11,508.97

6. Approve Appointment Interim Administrator*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of the following Interim Administrator for the 2025-2026 School Year, *subject to further investigation pursuant to law*:

	Name	Position/Location	Salary	Start Date	Not to Exceed
a	Vargas, Marcos	Director/District	\$550/per diem	10/16/25	80 days

7. Approve Appointment Leave Replacement

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of the following leave replacement for the 2025-2026 school year; *subject to further investigation pursuant to law*:

	Name	School	Position/UPC	Level	Step	Salary	Replace	Effective
a	Beaudry, Christina	BMS	Teacher TCH.MS.SCNC.NA.05.LR	BA	1	\$67,395 <i>prorated</i>	9240	9/24/25 - 11/21/25

8. Approve Mentor

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following mentors for the 2025-2026 school year Provisional Teacher Program:

	Name	School/Subject	Certificate	Mentor	Rate of Pay
a	Beaudry, Christina	BMS/Elementary K-6	CE	Fitzgerald, Marianne	\$1,000

9. Approve Leave of Absence*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following leave of absence:

	Employee #	School	Position	Type of leave	Date of Leave/Notes
a	9364	BHS	Certified	FMLA Anticipated RTW	11/10/25-01/30/25 (unpaid w/ benefits) 02/02/26
b	9951	BHS	Certified	Unpaid Anticipated RTW	02/02/2026-02/27/2026 03/02/26

10 Rescind Athletic Position

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, rescind the appointment of the following athletic positions for the 2025-2026 school year:

	Name	Position	School	Season	Stipend
a	Nadolny, Tyler	Wrestling: Assistant	BMS	Winter 2026	\$3,220.91

11 Approve Athletic & Co-Curricular Positions

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of the following athletic and co-curricular positions for the 2025-2026 school year:

	Name	Position	School	Season	Stipend
a	Weinstein, Julie	Drama: Spring	BMS	Spring 2026	\$2,872.45
b	Simoneau, Jon	Baseball: Head	BMS	Spring 2026	\$4,347.97
c	Liotard, Deanna	Softball: Assistant	BMS	Spring 2026	\$2,825.92
d	LaSpada, Joseph	Track: Boy's Head	BMS	Spring 2026	\$4,347.97
e	O'Halloran, Annie	Track: Girl's Head	BMS	Spring 2026	\$4,347.97

12. Approve Athletic & Co-Curricular Positions*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of the following athletic and co-curricular positions for the 2025-2026 school year:

	Name	Position	School	Season	Stipend
a	Nadolny, Tyler	Wrestling Coach - Womens Varsity	BHS	Winter 2026	\$9,823.00
b	LaBruno, Wendi	Volleyball: Assistant	BHS	Winter 2026	\$5,583.60
c	Mrak, Michael	Fencing: Assistant	BHS	Winter 2026	\$5,583.60
d	Fritche, Macklin	Winter Track: Assistant	BHS	Winter 2026	\$5,779.03
e	Paterno, Amy	Assistant Athletic Director 50%	BHS	Spring 2026	\$1,964.60
f	Mahlik, Philip	Baseball: Head	BHS	Spring 2026	\$8,272.00
g	Kaufman, Justin	Baseball: Asst JV	BHS	Spring 2026	\$6,204.00

	Name	Position	School	Season	Stipend
h	Spautz, Daniel	Golf: Head	BHS	Spring 2026	\$7,444.80
i	Manore, Paul	Golf: Asst	BHS	Spring 2026	\$5,583.60
j	Thompson, Gilbert	Lacrosse: Men's Asst JV	BHS	Spring 2026	\$6,204.00
k	Zangara, Timothy	Lacrosse: Men's Asst FR	BHS	Spring 2026	\$5,790.40
l	Samson, Alyssa	Lacrosse: Women's Asst JV	BHS	Spring 2026	\$6,204.00
m	Nadolny, Tyler	Lacrosse: Women's Asst FR	BHS	Spring 2026	\$5,790.40
n	Sleight, Kaitlyn	Lacrosse: Women's Volunteer	BHS	Spring 2026	\$0
o	Wierzbicki, Kyle	Open Gym: Spring	BHS	Spring 2026	\$1,809.50
p	O'Connor, Leslie	Softball: Head	BHS	Spring 2026	\$8,272.00
q	LaValle, Alexa	Softball: Asst JV	BHS	Spring 2026	\$6,204.00
r	Froysland, Megan	Softball: Asst FR 50%	BHS	Spring 2026	\$2,895.20
s	Palmieri, Jeremy	Softball: Asst FR 50%	BHS	Spring 2026	\$2,895.20
t	Boudreau, Derek	Tennis: Men's Head	BHS	Spring 2026	\$7,444.80
u	Voight, Douglas	Tennis: Men's Asst	BHS	Spring 2026	\$5,583.60
v	Carmon, Dave	Track & Field: Men's Head	BHS	Spring 2026	\$8,272.00
w	Szostak, David	Track & Field: Women's Head	BHS	Spring 2026	\$8,272.00
x	Filieri, Michael	Track & Field: Assistant	BHS	Spring 2026	\$6,204.00
y	Tynan, Jessica	Track & Field: Assistant	BHS	Spring 2026	\$6,204.00
z	LaPine, Matthew	Activities Technician Backup	BHS	25-26 Sch Yr	\$61.12/hour
aa	Anderson, Richard	Math Lab (not to exceed \$5,000 for group)	BHS	25-26 Sch Yr	\$61.12/hour
ab	Falleta, Luann	Math Lab (not to exceed \$5,000 for group)	BHS	25-26 Sch Yr	\$61.12/hour
ac	Levine, Scott	Math Lab (not to exceed \$5,000 for group)	BHS	25-26 Sch Yr	\$61.12/hour
ad	O'Brien, Kyle	Math Lab (not to exceed \$5,000 for group)	BHS	25-26 Sch Yr	\$61.12/hour

13. Amend Stipend Positions*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, amend the following stipend positions for the 2025-2026 school year:

	Name	Position	School	Season	Stipend
a	Smith, Jodi	District Wellness Coordinator <i>Funded by SHIF Wellness Grant</i>	Central	25-26 School Yr	\$1,250 \$1,000
b	Galuppo, Julianne	District Wellness Coordinator <i>Funded by SHIF Wellness Grant</i>	Central	25-26 School Yr	\$1,250 \$1,000

14. Approve Stipend Position*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of the following stipend position for the 2025-2026 school year, retroactive to July 1, 2025 and with end date to be determined by the Superintendent:

	Name	Position	Stipend	Effective
a	Riccio, Frank	Director of Operations for Custodial Foreman Duties	\$2,000/month	7/1/25

15. Approve Translator/Interpreter*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following Translator/Interpreter for the 2025-2026 school year:

	Name	Rate of Pay
a	Gutierrez, Tatiana	\$61.12/hour

16. Approve Instructional Observation

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following instructional observation for the 2025-2026 school year:

	Name	School/Subject	Educator	Program	Hours
a	Mahlik, Gina	BES/Physical Education	Jeremy Palmieri	Kean University	25 hours/Fall 2025

17. Approve Superintendent Evaluation Calendar*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the 2025 - 2026 Superintendent Evaluation Calendar pursuant to the timelines set forth below:

October 15, 2025	Board Update provided by the Superintendent in Executive Session
January 28, 2026	Board Update provided by the Superintendent in Executive Session
March 1, 2026 - March 15, 2026	Superintendent uploads evaluation materials to NJSBA
March 3, 2026 - March 17, 2026	Board begins evaluation of Superintendent
April 27, 2026	Board window to complete evaluation of the superintendent closes
April 29, 2026	Board discussion of the evaluation of the Superintendent in Executive Session
May 20, 2026	Board review of evaluation draft in Executive Session
June 15, 2026	Board discussion and approval of evaluation with Superintendent in Executive Session

18. Approve Substitutes*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following substitutes for the 2025-2026 school year *subject to further investigation pursuant to law*:

	Name	Substitute Position	Certification	Effective
a	Elflein, Frederick	Teacher/Paraprofessional	County Substitute Certificate	10/16/25
b	Collins-Horn, Peyton	Teacher/Paraprofessional	County Substitute Certificate	10/16/25
c	Bordiuk, Christopher	Teacher/Paraprofessional	County Substitute Certificate	10/16/25 <i>Pending clearance</i>
d	Clark, Elizabeth	Teacher/Paraprofessional	Standard Certificate	10/16/25 <i>Pending clearance</i>
e	Arteaga Muller, Rocio	Teacher/Paraprofessional	County Substitute Certificate	10/16/25 <i>Pending clearance</i>
f	Kielb, Joseph	Teacher/Paraprofessional	County Substitute Certificate	10/16/25 <i>Pending clearance</i>

C. Personnel Old Business / New Business - none.

XV. POLICY

A. Committee Report and Discussion: Ms. Ballard gave the report. The Committee met on September 30, 2025. The following items were discussed:

Regulation Discussions

- Policy 5460, High School Graduation carried to next meeting.

Regulation on Second Reading

- 5516 Use of Electronic Communication Devices
 - A health concern was raised in re “Photelts;” all the phones in and out, seems like they may get dirty, spread germs; maybe wipes should be provided?
- 5511 Dress and Grooming
 - Concern raised again about uneven application of regulation between girls and boys; concern also raised about possible pushback from parents. It was also noted that now handbooks and regulations match.

Board Bylaw Discussion

- The option of changing from our current operation as a board of committees to a committee of the whole was presented. This is an extension of last month’s discussion of how Board Meetings are working for Board members.
- Committee of the whole would involve elimination of individual committees and add a second public meeting; all the committee work would be done in public with all members present.
- The committee of the whole meeting work session would be held in public; the Board would work their way through every committee. Typically, no votes are held; voting would take place in the regular public meeting.
- Dr. Brotschul offered the following:
 - Adult volunteers have a shelf life; as it is, the committees are robust and comprehensive; administration can dive in; meetings and discussions can be in-depth.
 - As for the committee of the whole: committees meet one after another, interest and discussions can wane after several committee meetings. By necessity committee meetings are shorter on the committee of the whole. Plus is that everyone hears the same message and engages at the same time.
 - Possible result: members know less, administration may provide less information; won’t be as robust. May not have time to provide appropriate context.
 - Dr. Brotschul also discussed work sessions in public; committees typically met for one hour each.
 - Currently our committee structure is strong; committee reports are thorough and well done.
 - Dr. Brotschul concluded that one is not better than the other, they are just different.
- Committee Discussion
 - this could help work stay focused without us drifting into administrative issues
 - maybe everyone on the board in one room has value
 - sometimes we need to sit through information twice
 - may move faster
 - may not be able to address all issues
 - may keep us from taking a deep dive
 - would lose the multi layered approach within the committee
 - The committee recommends a discussion by the wider board at some point.

Civility Policy

- We looked at a modified policy by Strauss Esmay, provided by Dr. Brotschul only to kick start the process; he did not weigh in as it is a board governance matter so the onus is on the Board to create policy.
- Committee Discussion
 - How do we conduct ourselves and what are our expectations for the meeting?
 - Speaking from an operational perspective
 - Adhering to proper procedure and protocol
 - Holding every individual accountable
 - Board meetings governed by parliamentary procedure but currently, there is no equivalent mechanism in committee meetings
 - Apply our Board norms in committee
 - Stay focused on Board topics
 - Don't put Admins in position of managing/acting as referee for board meetings; becomes tenuous for administration
 - Better manage personal struggles/differentiate between that and board members/public officials
 - Issue of perception
 - We have a collective responsibility to monitor each other
 - Be in agreement and abide with each other
 - No lies, no threats
 - Importance of words; being extraordinarily careful of words that may have a loaded meaning
 - Is there a structured way to handle those things?

Policy 5756

- As we do not conduct new committee business via email, some issues raised in an email after the last meeting remained to be addressed.
- Discussion re: transitioning.
- There seemed to be confusion as to the role of doctors associated with the school district and interactions with students.
- Dr. Brotschul stated, multiple times and with great clarity, that there is never a circumstance in which transitioning would be suggested or facilitated. It does not and would never happen.
- The role of the district is to create healthy and safe environments for folks who identify as transgender.
- The school is guided by a memorandum of agreement with the police department; starting with in-house professionals before calling home; need to stabilize before engaging other parties.
- The policy is followed to a T. Again, there is no facilitation of conversations between a child and a medical doctor.
- If a student confides in an adult, they are asked questions such as what facilities do you want to use; are your friends, teachers, parents aware; If they don't want to tell their parents, the student is advised to think about talking to their parents; If a student confides in an adult and says they are okay there is no further action taken.
- Flexibility is part of the policy; the goal is to get all parties to work from a safe place.
- Guidance is based on the policy which is based on the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination. The guidance is informed from the law. The policy is informed from the guidance. SHSD follows the law. SHSD follows the policy.

- Silvia expressed her view that she believes it is dishonest to not share this information with a parent. She also suggested that a template be created for distinguishing between elementary, middle school and high school students, as there are many variables between age groups.
- There are no such carve outs in the Law Against Discrimination; these changes would effectively make SHSD a district that ignores the LAD.
- Silvia also asked how students who utilize chosen names over legal names appear in Genesis; Dr. Brotschul clarified that discussion further in a follow up email. Some of the key points, as well as information in reference to parental considerations, are shared here:
 - Parental Considerations: The following are circumstances where the parents will know about their child's transgender status:
 - When the child discloses it to a parent.
 - When parents log into Genesis, if the child has requested to be referred to by a different name at school.
 - When a child who is transgender and is subject to a risk assessment conducted by the risk assessment team, parents would be notified of the risk assessment and any further actions determined by the District. During that process, it may be disclosed that the child is transgender, notably if the nature of the referral is directly correlated to the student's status as an individual who identifies as transgender.
 - The administration adheres to the policy established by the Board for transgender students and makes every effort to ensure its accurate and consistent application. If the language ever changes, either through Board action or outcomes from well-settled litigation that inform future Board action, we will certainly respond accordingly to ensure compliance with the Board's policy.

Discussion: Several Board members engaged in dialogue around P5756, and administrators responded to questions. After much discussion, Mrs. Wry asked if the Board could vote to affirm P5756. At that point, Mr. Baker called the question. Mrs. Hoppe seconded.

The motion was approved by roll call vote of 10-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Gomez, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda.

B. Action Items: Ms. Gils moved item #1, Mrs. Hoppe seconded.

Item #1 was approved by roll call vote of 10-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Gomez, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda.

1. Second Reading*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the second reading of the following bylaw, policy & regulations:

Policy/Regulation #	Title
R 5511	Dress and Grooming
R 5516	Use of Electronic Communication Devices

C. Policy Old Business / New Business: Ms. Ballard motioned to affirm P5756. Mrs. Santoro seconded.

The motion was approved by roll call vote of 8-1-1. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda. No: Ms. Gils. Abstain: Mrs. Gomez.

Additionally, Mrs. Gomez suggested formatting corrections in the dress code policy. Mrs. Wry stressed the policy should be different across schools and that parental cooperation is integral. Ms. Gils agreed, saying females are subject to more scrutiny.

XVI. STUDENT SERVICES

A. Committee Report and Discussion: Mrs. Santoro indicated the committee did not meet this month and did not give the report.

Discussion: There was a brief discussion regarding the calendar, including questions around alignment with the Bedminster K-8 calendar as well as why school would begin before Labor Day.

B. Action Items: Ms. Cooper moved items #1-3, Mrs. Santoro seconded.

Items #2-3 were approved by roll call vote of 10-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Gomez, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda.

Item #1 was approved by roll call vote of 9-0-1. Voting: Ayes: Mr. Baker, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Gils, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda. Abstain: Mrs. Gomez.

1. HIB Report

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education reviewed the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying cases presented on September 17, 2025 (none presented during this time period) and upheld the findings and/or consequences recommended by the Superintendent:

HIBs to Date (25-26 SY)	Founded	Unfounded	Split	Total
BES	0	0	0	0
BMS	0	0	0	0

2. HIB Report*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education reviewed the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying cases presented on September 17, 2025 (none presented during this time period), and upheld the findings and/or consequences recommended by the Superintendent:

HIBs to Date (25-26 SY)	Founded	Unfounded	Split	Total
BHS	1	0	0	1

3. Approve HIB Self Assessment Report*

RESOLVED, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Superintendent's report on the New Jersey Department of Education School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights District and School Grade Report for the 2024-2025 school year.

C. Student Services Old Business / New Business - none.

Board Announcements

1. Ms. Gils spoke in favor of two meetings a month and thanked Dr. Butler as well.
2. Mrs. Hoppe thanked the Board for keeping her informed during her recent surgery.

Public Comments

1. Sarah Falzarano - SHEA - thanked students, staff members, and administrators, and was grateful for the Board partnership.
2. Jennifer Walsh - discussed wrestling matters and supported Ryan Abbott, former volunteer coach. Also discussed employing our attorney for Mahmoud vs Taylor backup.
3. Maria Ortiz-Myers - thanked all for work and dedication, especially Dr. Brotschul and Dr. Butler for their straightforward approach. Suggested focusing on 100% of our students.
4. Craig Caggiano - discussed P5756 and profound disappointment in the Board affirming the policy.
5. Brad Eich - commended Board and discussed support for Ryan Abbott, former volunteer coach.
6. Allicen Librera - discussed Mahmoud vs Taylor related communications, and suggested political performance by Ms. Gils.
7. Sarah McShane - thanked Dr. Butler for attending the recent Hispanic heritage celebration at Bedwell, and thanked the Board for protecting children.
8. Kelly Hunt - impressed with care displayed for all students, and was impressed with the recent Hispanic heritage celebration. Also lauded the recent Book Fair at BMS.
9. Maura McGrath - indicated meetings continue to get worse, and encouraged all to vote. Addressed P5756 and Mahmoud vs Taylor and discussed the Board norm of not being on cell phones at the Board table.
10. Christa Reudy - discussed Ryan Abbott, former volunteer coach, and asked the Board to reconsider.
11. Matthew Vasquez - wrestler supporting Ryan Abbott and his care for the sport and the athletes.
12. Melissa Leonard - teacher at Bedwell for 20+ years, proud to work in the District, and discussed that all should feel safe, empowered, and valued.
13. Sean Daugherty - discussed AP Social Studies class his older daughter is in, stating she is being underserved by instruction that is not balanced.
14. Michelle Dooley - discussed P5756 and thanked the Board for supporting children.
15. Megan Dooley - school counselor in the District; discussed P5756 and stated the current spotlight is on a tiny population. Stated transgender and non-binary students are supported and cared for.
16. Silvia Gils - the reason for the phone call was because her mother has Covid and is hospitalized. Responded to Ms. Librera, saying the District is not in compliance, and she clarified that administrators keep secrets, not teachers.
17. Craig Caggiano (second 3 minutes) - discussed P5756.
18. Allicen Librera (second 3 minutes) - suggested that the Board could save money if an attorney was not present to babysit.
19. Silvia Gils (second 3 minutes) - stated Ms. Librera's comments were a personal attack and were inappropriate.

Seeing no one else from the public, Mr. Baker moved to close public comments. Ms. Gils seconded. All voted in favor.

Mrs. Frenda clarified that the NJ Law Against Discrimination (LAD) is the prevailing law.

Adjournment

Mr. Baker moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:41 pm. Mrs. Santoro seconded the motion. All in favor. Ayes: 10-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard D. Liguori
Business Administrator / Board Secretary

***Note: The areas of permitted voting for the Bedminster district representative of the Board of Education are: (a) Tuition to be charged the sending district by the receiving district and the bill lists or contracts for the purchase, operation or maintenance of facilities, equipment and instructional materials to be used in the education of the pupils of the sending district; (b) New capital construction to be utilized by sending district pupils; (c) Appointment, transfer or removal of teaching staff members providing services to pupils of the sending district, including any teaching staff member who is a member of the receiving district's central administrative staff; (d) Addition or deletion of curricular and extracurricular programs involving pupils of the sending district; (e) Any matter directly involving the sending district pupils or programs and services utilized by those pupils; (f) Approval of the annual receiving district budget; (g) Any collectively negotiated agreement involving employees who provide services utilized by sending district pupils; (h) Any individual employee contracts not covered by a collectively negotiated agreement, if those employees provide or oversee programs or services utilized by sending district pupils; and (i) Any matter concerning governance of the receiving district board of education including, but not limited to, the selection of the board president or vice-president, approval of board bylaws, and the employment of professionals or consultants such as attorneys, architects, engineers, or others who provide services to the receiving district board of education.**

(cf: P.L.1996, c.103, s.1)