

**The Somerset Hills School District
Reorganization Meeting
January 5, 2026 - 6:00 pm
Bernards High School - Community Room**

Call to Order & Welcome

Board Secretary Mr. Liguori called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance**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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.

Oath of Office - Mr. Liguori administered the Oath of Office to Kelly Hunt, Allicen Librera, and Patricia Wry.

Seating of New Board Members & Roll Call

Present:

Ms. Ballard	Mrs. Librera
Ms. Clark-Emery	Mrs. Santoro
Ms. Cooper	Mrs. Wry
Ms. Hoppe	Mrs. Frenda
Mrs. Hunt	

Absent: Mrs. Gomez.

Also Present:

Dr. Brian Brotschul, Superintendent
 Dr. Coleen Butler, Assistant Superintendent
 Mr. Richard Liguori, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
 Ms. Megan Oduyela, Esq., Busch Law Group

Approve the Annual School Election

Candidates	Term	Total
Patricia Wry	3 Years (Bernardsville)	1,970
Silvia Gils	3 Years (Bernardsville)	1,301
Allicen Librera	3 Years (Bernardsville)	1,680
Kelly Hunt	3 Years (Bernardsville)	1,740

Ms. Cooper moved the item, Mrs. Santoro seconded.

The item was approved by roll call vote of 9-0-0. Voting: Ayes: Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Hunt, Mrs. Librera, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda. Absent: Mrs. Gomez.

Organizational Procedure**A. Nomination and Election of President**

Motion to nominate Mrs. Frenda made by Mrs. Santoro and seconded by Ms. Clark-Emery.

Any other nominations: None.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Frenda was approved as President by a roll call vote of 9-0-0.

Mrs. Frenda, as newly elected President of the Board, assumed control of the meeting.

B. Nomination and Election of Vice President

Motion to nominate Mrs. Santoro made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Ms. Ballard.

Any other nominations: None.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Santoro was approved as Vice President by a roll call vote 9-0-0.

Organizational Action Items

Mrs. Hoppe moved items A-F, Mrs. Hunt seconded.

Items A-F were approved by roll call vote of 9-0-0. Ayes: Ms. Ballard, Ms. Clark-Emery, Ms. Cooper, Mrs. Hoppe, Mrs. Hunt, Mrs. Librera, Mrs. Santoro, Mrs. Wry, Mrs. Frenda. Absent: Mrs. Gomez.

A. Adoption of Code of Ethics (18A:12-24.1) for School Board Members*

(Note: each Board Member read one, and the motion included accepting all for adoption)

Resolved, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education adopts the Code of Ethics for School Board members:

A school board member shall abide by the following Code of Ethics for School Board Members:

1. I will uphold and enforce all laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.
2. I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools that meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, or social standing.

3. I will confine my board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the board has consulted those who will be affected by them.
4. I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well run.
5. I will recognize that authority rests with the board of education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the board.
6. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.
7. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. In all other matters, I will provide accurate information and, in concert with my fellow board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its school.
8. I will vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.
9. I will support and protect school personnel in the proper performance of their duties.
10. I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on the complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

B. Re-Adopt All By-Laws & Policies*

Resolved, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education re-adopts all current Board Policies & By-Laws.

C. Re-Adopt All Program & Curriculum*

Resolved, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education re-adopts all existing Curriculum, on file.

D. Re-adopt All District Tradebooks, Software, Motion Pictures/Films*

Resolved, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education re-adopts district tradebook list, software list, and media list, on file.

E. Board Committee Assignments*

Resolved, that the following Board Committees be re-established:

- Business Operations
- Personnel and Policy
- Curriculum
- Negotiations
- Student Services

F. Approve Authorized Signatures*

Resolved, that the Somerset Hills Board of Education approve the authorized signatures on warrants as follows:

Accounts	Signatures
a) Payroll	Board Secretary & Board President
b) Agency	Board Secretary & Board President
c) General	Board Secretary & Board President
d) Cafeteria	Board Secretary
e) Unemployment	Board Secretary
f) Flexible Spending	Board Secretary
g) Scholarship Trust Account	Board Secretary

Board Training - the Board received annual training in the following areas:

Annual Ethics Training - by Gwen Thornton, New Jersey School Boards Association
Social Media for Board Members - by Megan Oduyela, Esq., Busch Law Group

Public Comment

Seeing no one from the public, Mrs. Santoro moved to close public comments. Mrs. Hunt seconded. All were in favor.

Executive Session

Ms. Cooper made a motion to go to Executive Session at 7:22 pm. Mrs. Librera 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: Attorney-Client Privilege and Potential 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.

The Board returned to Open Session at 8:35 pm.

Adjournment

Mrs. Santoro moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 pm. Ms. Cooper seconded the motion. All in favor. Ayes: 9-0-0.

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)