

February 2, 2026

The Stillwater Township Board of Education met on February 2, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the Stillwater School Library 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 26, 2026. Notices were posted in the Stillwater School, Town Hall, Stillwater Post Office, Swartswood Post Office and the Stillwater School Website.

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

Absent: None.

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

### **OATHS FOR RETURNING BOARD MEMBER**

(N.J.S.A:18A:17.11)

Mrs. Metzgar administered the oath to the following person for the 3-year full term for membership on the Stillwater Township Board of Education:

-Karen Thibault

Mrs. Metzgar congratulated Mrs. Thibault and thanked her for her continued service!

### **BOARD BUSINESS**

1. January is Board Appreciation Month! Students gave the board members a book of mad libs of their student resolutions, thanking the board members for all they do.
2. 2025-2026 Stillwater Township Educational Services Professional of the Year-Mrs. Cramer  
We are proud to recognize our school nurse, Colleen Hurley, as our Educational Services Professional of the Year. Colleen goes above and beyond each day in her care for both students and staff, building strong, trusting connections with families and creates consistent, compassionate lines of communication. This year, she took on an additional role supporting families in need by connecting them with various resources, including holiday dinners and gifts. For many, Colleen has truly been a lifeline, and our school community is incredibly fortunate to have her on our staff. She is most deserving of this recognition.
3. 2025-2026 Stillwater Township Teacher of the Year-Dr. Papa

Mr. Tiberi is a vital part of the Stillwater Township Elementary School community, as he brings energy, empathy, and leadership to our school every day. As a talented educator, he transforms a standard PE class into a masterclass in character building, where students learn

that resilience and teamwork are just as important as physical activity. Mr. Tiberi is the ideal candidate for this honor as demonstrated by his accomplishments: he annually leads professional development workshops at PE Jams for Physical Education teachers throughout the state, he is an integral member of our CORE team, he collaborates with his colleagues in planning and leading Den Rallies, a state leader in aquatic safety, secured the community grant for the walking path, he is a committee member for the NJDOE Comprehensive Health & PE Standards revision, and most importantly he is our very own Elf on the Shelf! I want to congratulate Mr. Tiberi for being named our Educator of the Year and we wish him all the best in the pursuit of the Sussex County Teacher of the Year.

**That the following Board Business resolutions be approved:**

4. Motion to approve the Reorganization meeting minutes, Committee of the Whole Board of Education meeting minutes & Executive Session Minutes from January 5, 2026. (attachment)
5. Motion to approve the December 31, 2025 Board Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports which balanced in the amount of \$4,007,003.47 pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-16.10(c)3, we certify that as of December 31, 2025 after review of the secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c)4, and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. (attachment)
6. Motion to approve ad hoc committees for budget, negotiations, building & grounds, and regional shared service, as attached. (attachment)
7. Motion to approve cancelling the February 10, 2026 Committee of the Whole Board of Education meeting and schedule a special meeting for February 18, 2026 for the purpose architect interviews.

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

**Voice Vote:** Mrs. Galante-Abstain #4, Aye 5-7; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Aye; Mr. Franek-Aye; Mrs. Frey-Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault- Abstain #4, Aye 5-7; Mrs. Valeich- Abstain #4, Aye 5-7; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motions carried.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Papa reported on the following items:

BOE Appreciation:

On behalf of Stillwater Twp. School, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the members of the Stillwater Township Board of Education for their unwavering commitment to our school community. Your vision and partnership have helped foster a school culture that prioritizes both academic excellence and the well-being of every student. We are grateful for your leadership and the countless volunteer hours you spend

ensuring that Stillwater Township Elementary School remains an excellent environment for our staff and students.

**Student Recognition:**

One of our 6th grade students, Abi L. was selected to serve on the Student Advisory Board for the New Jersey Climate Change Learning Collaborative (CCLC). The advisory board consists of approximately 18 outstanding fourth- through twelfth-grade students who share feedback on their experiences learning about climate change.

**Staff Member Recognitions:**

Mrs. Earley & Mr. Tiberi have been selected to serve on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards revision committees for Comprehensive Health & Physical Education. Mrs. Ciccolella will serve on the Science Standards Revision Committee. The leadership demonstrated by our teachers is making a direct impact on teaching and learning throughout our state.

I want to recognize Mrs. Smetana and her Core team for leading our school through the Great Kindness Challenge last week. Students engaged in various activities centered around being kind, respectful, welcoming, and empathic to those around them.

**1988 Project Update:**

The members of the BOE have reviewed the four Architectural proposals and we have invited three firms to provide presentations and to be interviewed by the full BOE on February 18. The BOE in collaboration with our administrative team and maintenance department will decide on which architectural firm we will award the project to.

**Student Council:**

Our Student Council is collecting canned food donations to supply the local food bank. The fundraiser is going all this week.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

Mrs. Galante congratulated Mrs. Hurley and Mr. Tiberi again and spoke a few words recognizing the impact on our district. Mrs. Thibault also thanked Mrs. Hurley for going above and beyond.

Mrs. Galante also thanked the board for voting her President again for another year.

**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 Superintendent:**

1. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve attached professional days. (attachment)
2. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to retroactively approve contract with Lisa Grau as the part-time RTI Interventionist leave replacement teacher for 3 days per week, beginning January 8, 2026-on or about March 30, 2026 at a rate of \$305.06 per day, no benefits, to be paid on the same schedule as all other substitute teachers.
3. Motion to accept with regret the resignation of Melissa Piazza, effective September 1, 2026 for the purpose of retirement.
4. Motion upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the advancement on guide for the following employee for the 2026-2027 school year, pending completion of credits and verification of official transcripts:

Alexandra Caccavale BA to MA

5. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the following substitute teachers/paraprofessionals/main office secretaries for the 2025-2026 school year:
  - Rebecca Sanderson (pending criminal history & background check)
  - Joseph McAuliffe (pending criminal history & background check)
6. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the contract for the following full-time Para-Professional staff member for employment for the 2025-2026 school year from February 2, 2026-June 30, 2026:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Base Hourly Rate</u>	<u>Annual Base Salary</u>	<u>Adjustments</u>	<u>Total Salary- To be prorated</u>
Schneider, Kathrine	Preschool	\$16.05	\$ 18,987.15	\$750 Bachelor's Degree	\$19,737.15

7. Motion, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve Kathrine Schneider as a bus aide on ST7 from February 2, 2026 to June 30, 2026 for an annual stipend of \$3,240, to be prorated to start date, to be paid as worked.

**Moved By:** Mr. DeGroat **Seconded By:** Mr. Franek

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

## **POLICY**

None.

## **EDUCATION & CURRICULUM**

**That the following Education & Curriculum resolutions be approved:**

1. Motion to retroactively approve Audra Rutnik to present ‘Improve your Child's Behavior’ at the preschool parent night on January 12, 2026 at a total cost of \$800 to be split with Hampton, Fredon, Sandyston, and Stillwater. Stillwater’s cost will be \$200, Hampton will be the LEA.
2. Be It Hereby Resolved, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board affirms the Superintendent's decision regarding 2025-2026 Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Case #4-2526.

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

**Roll Call Vote:** Mrs. Galante- Aye #1, Abstain #2; Mrs. Williver-Aye; Mr. DeGroat-Aye; Mr. Franek- Aye; Mrs. Frey-Aye; Mrs. Kraft-Aye; Mrs. Thibault-Aye #1, Abstain #2; Mrs. Valeich- Aye #1, Abstain #2; and Mrs. Voris-Aye. Motions carried.

## **BUILDING & GROUNDS**

1. Building & Grounds Update- Mrs. Metzgar provided an update on the 1941/1956 boiler project status and anticipated timeline.

**That the following Building & Grounds resolution be approved:**

2. Motion to retroactively approve the revised building and use calendar for January 2026. (attachment)
3. Motion to approve building and use calendar for February 2026. (attachment)

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

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

**TRANSPORTATION**

**That the following Transportation resolution be approved:**

1. Motion to approve the following new bus stops for the 2025-2026 school year:

ST6- Hiking Parking Lot on Hampton Rd. (Bus Aide Pickup)  
Hampton Rescue Squad (Bus Aide Pickup)  
920 Pond Brook Road

2. Motion to approve the following field trips for the 2025-2026 school year:

Location	Grade
KRHS Jr. High Play Preview - Kittatinny HS	5 & 6

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

Date	Location	Grade	Cost
February 18, 2026	KRHS Jr. High Play Preview - Kittatinny HS	5 & 6	2 Buses: \$275.07/bus= \$550.14 total

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

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

**BUDGET & FINANCE**

1. Budget Update- Mrs. Metzgar updated the board that administration has been meeting with teaching staff and buildings and grounds to begin to compile what items are needed for next year. We will begin meeting with the budget committee this month. There is still no confirmed information from the state in regards to the state aid formula, however, it is likely the budget address will be delayed. Not sure what this will do for our budget approval timelines if they will adjust the timelines as well.

**That the following Budget & Finance resolutions be approved:**

- 2. Motion to approve the following checks from December 16, 2025-January 26, 2026 as attached: (attachment)

<b>Account</b>	<b>Check Numbers</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Funds 10, 11, 12, 20	30651, N1223, N0108, N0115	\$747,179.78
Capital Reserve	N/A	\$0
Student Activities	6714	\$728.91
Cafeteria	2758-2759	\$12,605.01
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$760,513.70</b>

- 3. Motion to approve the attached list of purchase orders over \$1,000 for the 2025-2026 school year. (attachment)
- 4. Motion to approve monthly travel as attached. (attachment)
- 5. Motion to approve transfers from December 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025 as attached. (attachment)
- 6. Motion to approve the transfer from capital reserve to general fund in the amount of \$51,500 for architects fees for the 41/56 boiler project.
- 7. Motion to approve the participation in the NexTrex Recycling Challenge for an additional year.
- 8. Motion to approve the grant amendment for the Climate Change Education Resilience Continuation grant for the 2025-2026 school year.
- 9. Motion to approve the following resolution, Waiver of Requirements in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program:

Whereas, N.J.A.C 6A:23A-5.3 provides that a school district may request a waiver of compliance with respect to the district’s participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program for the 2026-2027 school year, and

Whereas, the Stillwater Township Board of Education desires to apply for this waiver due to the fact that it projects having fewer than 40 Medicaid eligible classified students,

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Stillwater Township Board of Education hereby authorizes the Superintendent to submit to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools in the County of Sussex an appropriate waiver of the requirements of N.J.A.C 6A:23A-5.3 for the 2026-2027 school year.

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

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

## **LEGISLATION**

-Mrs. Metzgar updated the board on the new LFN notice in regards to legal ad postings.

## **COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Mrs. Voris reported on the following community relations:

- Registration for Kittatinny Little League is now open.
- Registration for also open for Kittatinny lacrosse
- PTA Valentine Shop is open Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>.
- PTA Meeting- February 9<sup>th</sup>
- PTA Snowflake Dance- February 20<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:00pm.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Budget Calendar (attachment)
2. Board member required training- Due December 31, 2026
3. Board member Ethics/Financial Disclosure Forms-Due April 30, 2026
4. Upcoming Sussex County School Boards Meeting:
  - February 5, 2026- Virtual- Topic: “From Our Districts to Yours: Effective Strategies for Communications and Community Engagement”
5. Mr. DeGroat asked about the cursive handwriting bill. Dr. Papa and Mrs. Cramer mentioned that it is for 2026-2027 school year, but because of the board, we still have handwriting in grades 2 and 3.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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*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. \*\**

-Richard Kelsky-Cedar Ridge Road, Stillwater- Asked Mrs. Metzgar if we were going out to bid for the architect for the boiler project. He said the board voted no on the motion at the January 5<sup>th</sup> board meeting and that Mr. DeGroat indicated we should go out to bid for the architects.

Mrs. Metzgar and Dr. Papa explained that at the December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting the board voted down the initial architect proposal for the boiler project. Following that meeting, Mrs. Metzgar obtained two other quotes for architect services and at the January 5<sup>th</sup> board meeting, the board awarded the contract to EI Associates. Mr. Kelsky disagreed with their response.

Mrs. Galante ended the back and forth and asked if he had any other public comment.

Mr. Kelsky then asked when the agenda became public. He was concerned since this meeting was originally scheduled for January 26<sup>th</sup>. He also questioned the 48 hour notice. Mr. Kelsky requested his concerns be reflected in the minutes.

Mrs. Metzgar stated the agenda was posted on the website Monday morning. The notices were advertised on Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. All legal notices are posted on our website and contain the intent of agenda as per the statutory requirement.

Mr. Kelsky continued to comment on the matter, at which point President Galante reminded him that the public comment portion is intended for comments directed to the Board.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

## **ADJOURN**

Motion made by Mrs. Thibault and second by Mrs. Valeich, to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,



René Metzgar  
Business Administrator/Board Secretary