STOW-MUNROE FALLS CITY SCHOOLS

Issue #26
Summer 2026

From the SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

Special Edition!



Dr. Felisha Gould, Superintendent - Stow-Munroe Falls City Schools



ALL-AMERICAN CITY CONFERENCE 2026

This summer, I had the incredible honor of representing the Stow-Munroe Falls City School District alongside an outstanding team of City leaders, residents, business owners, volunteers, and community partners as Stow traveled to Denver, Colorado, as one of only 20 communities in the nation selected as finalists for the National Civic League's 2026 All-America City Award.

Standing on that national stage was a proud moment, not because of a single presentation or recognition, but because it reflected who we are as a community. It was an opportunity to tell Stow's story, celebrate the partnerships that make our city special, and learn from communities across the country that are equally committed to building stronger places to live, work, and learn.

One of the greatest benefits of attending the conference was learning from communities across the nation. Although each finalist told a unique story, one message was remarkably consistent: the strongest communities intentionally build relationships, invite residents into the decision-making process, listen with purpose, and collaborate across schools, government, businesses, nonprofits, and community organizations. Those lessons reinforced the work already underway here in Stow while inspiring new ideas we can continue to explore together.



HOW CIVIC ENGAGEMENT HAS SHAPED OUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE

Our presentation during the conference highlighted three examples of how civic engagement has shaped the City of Stow's future:

- The **AMP and Public Arts Master Plan** demonstrates how residents, local artists, businesses, and community organizations came together to create a shared vision for public spaces that foster community pride, economic vitality, and a vibrant sense of place.
- The **Comprehensive Zoning Rewrite and Safe School Travel Plan** showcase how residents, businesses, schools, and community partners collaborated to modernize development standards, improve walkability, strengthen neighborhood connectivity, and enhance safety for students and families.
- The **Charter Review Commission** illustrates how transparent government, diverse community representation, and meaningful public dialogue strengthen local democracy and encourage residents to actively participate in shaping their city.



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FINAL REFLECTIONS ON THE ALL-AMERICAN CITY CONFERENCE AND OUR CONTINUED WORK

The conference also reinforced something I have long believed: schools are among a community's greatest civic assets. Education does not occur in isolation. Student success is strengthened when schools are connected to families, local government, businesses, service organizations, and the broader community. When these partnerships are strong, students benefit not only academically but also socially, emotionally, and civically.

That message aligns directly with the Stow-Munroe Falls City School District Strategic Plan. Our strategic plan is grounded in preparing every student for success beyond graduation by fostering academic excellence, meaningful relationships, community partnerships, and opportunities for students to become engaged citizens and future leaders. Whether we are strengthening instructional programs, expanding career pathways, supporting student wellness, or building stronger partnerships with our community, we recognize that educating students is a shared responsibility.

Perhaps the most meaningful lesson I brought home from Denver is that civic engagement is not defined by a single project or event. It is a culture built through trust, transparency, collaboration, and a willingness to listen to one another. It is created when people from different backgrounds and perspectives come together around a shared vision and commit to strengthening their community.

In the weeks and months ahead, members of Stow's All-America City delegation will continue to reflect on what we learned, identify opportunities to strengthen partnerships, and share ideas that can further enhance our community. The conference may have concluded in Denver, but its impact will continue through the work we do together here at home.

I want to thank our Board of Education, City leadership, school staff, students, families, community organizations, volunteers, and residents for their commitment to making Stow a remarkable place to live, learn, and grow. Representing our community on the national stage was both an honor and a reminder that our greatest accomplishments are never achieved by a single individual or organization; they are the result of people coming together with a shared purpose.



TROY SPIKER NEW ATHLETIC DIRECTOR



Please welcome Troy Spiker, M.Ed, CAA as our new Athletic Director! A proven leader in athletic administration, Spiker brings a passionate, relationship-driven approach to expanding athletic programs and elevating the student-athlete experience.

Spiker holds a Master of Education in Athletic Administration from William Woods University and is a nationally Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) through the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA).

Spiker's distinguished leadership background includes serving as Athletic Director for Orrville High School and managing 39 high school and middle school teams within the Crestwood School District. Beyond administrative oversight, Spiker brings a decade of hands-on coaching and strength and conditioning experience across multiple Ohio school districts.

BULLDOG SPIRIT ON DISPLAY AT 4TH OF JULY PARADE

Stow-Munroe Falls City Schools was proud to once again be part of the Stow Fourth of July Parade, joining thousands of community members in celebrating one of the city's most cherished traditions.

Our school community was well represented throughout the parade, with students, staff, and district leaders proudly participating. The SMFHS Marching Band, Cheer Teams, Choir, Drama Club, elementary Cub Scouts, youth sports, and many more showcased the talent, spirit, and pride that define our district.

We extend our sincere thanks to the City of Stow for continuing this longstanding tradition, to the many volunteers and organizers who made the event possible, and to all of our students, families, staff, and community members who helped make this year's celebration such a memorable one.







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KRISTINA MARINO APPOINTED AS CHEER COACH

On July 1, Kristina Marino, B.S., CSCS, was appointed as the new Head Cheerleading Coach. Marino brings an exceptional blend of sports science expertise, strength and conditioning experience, and a strong background in dance and choreography. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science from Kent State University and is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) through the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA).

Important reminders!

- As we prepare for another exciting school year, one of the most important steps families can take is completing their student's information in **FinalForms**. By now, you should have received an email from Final Forms prompting you to review and update your child's information for the upcoming school year. Even if your information has not changed, please take a few moments to log in and review every tab before submitting your forms.
- Ohio's **Sales Tax Holiday** for 2026 will run from 12 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 7, until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 9.
- Kick off the new school year with us at our **Back-to-School Bash** on Friday, Aug. 15 outside the Field House on the high school's campus! Come out to reconnect with friends, meet new faces, and get excited for the year ahead.

SMF WELCOMES NEW PRINCIPALS AT RIVERVIEW AND WOODLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

I am excited to introduce our newest Principals, Sean Daugherty at Riverview Elementary and Brian Falhamer at Woodland Elementary!!

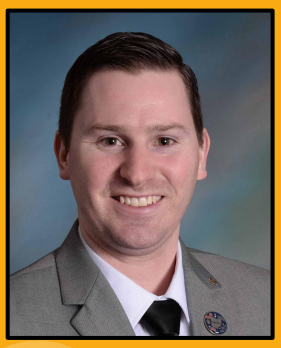


Daugherty brings extensive leadership experience in both elementary and middle schools. Most recently, he served as Principal of Brown Middle School in Ravenna City Schools and previously led West Main Elementary, where he focused on strengthening instruction, implementing evidence-based literacy practices, and promoting positive school culture. His leadership contributed to multiple school recognitions, including PBIS Bronze, Purple Star, and the Governor's Recognition for the Science of Reading. He holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from Walden University.



Falhamer brings 16 years of experience in education, including nearly a decade in school leadership. Most recently, he served as Principal of Fort Island Primary School in the Copley-Fairlawn City School District, where he championed student achievement through data-driven instruction, strengthened school culture through PBIS and MTSS initiatives, and fostered meaningful community partnerships. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Akron and is currently pursuing his Doctor of Education at Youngstown State University, with a focus on trauma-informed educational leadership.

BOE NAMES ERIC SOLTIS AS TREASURER



The Board of Education has approved a contract for Eric Soltis to serve as the district's next Treasurer, following a comprehensive search conducted in partnership with the Summit Educational Service Center (ESC).

Soltis brings nearly 15 years of school finance experience, including seven years as a public school treasurer and seven years as an assistant treasurer. Most recently, he served as Assistant Treasurer for Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District, where he helped oversee a $180 million budget while leading initiatives that strengthened fiscal transparency, increased investment earnings, improved financial reporting, and earned multiple Auditor of State Awards with Distinction.

Previously, Soltis served as Treasurer/CFO for Xenia Community Schools and Pike-Delta-York Local School District. In those roles, he guided long-range financial planning, negotiated labor agreements, managed capital projects, improved district financial health, and supported community engagement efforts.

A graduate of Bowling Green State University, Soltis holds both a Master of Business Administration and Bachelor of Science degree and maintains an Ohio School Treasurer License.