INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 111 **BOARD OF EDUCATION**
WATERTOWN, MINNESOTA 55388 **Regular Meeting**
September 28, 2026

I. The regular meeting of the Watertown-Mayer School Board in the Watertown City Hall on Monday, September 28, 2026 was called to order at 6:01 PM by Chair Hunter Feldt. Board members present: Feldt, Burns, Danielson, Schulz, Guetzkow, Neaton, and Onell. Board members absent: None. Administrative team members present: Superintendent Schuler, HS Principal Hennen, MS Principal Guertin, ES Principal Hansen, SPED Director Peyton, CE Director Dalton, Director of Teaching & Learning Vieau, and Activities Director Szymanski. Absent: None.

Public Comments: No public comments at this time.

II. **Visitor requests and consideration of the agenda.** Visitor MMS (Motion made and Seconded by) Danielson and Guetzkow to approve the agenda as presented. Passes 7-0.

III. **Consent Agenda**

MMS Burns and Neaton to approve the following consent agenda items: Regular Board Meeting minutes of August 24, 2026; Personnel Consent Agenda; and Business Consent Agenda. Passes 7-0.

IV. **Recognitions/ Presentations/ Showcase:**

A. Vice President Dee Dee Kahring from CESO (Center for Effective School Operations) gave an overview of the company's history and their priorities with their work with Watertown-Mayer Public Schools since their acquisition of SMS (School Management Systems).

B. SPED Director Peyton along with Jennifer Slipka, Kimberly Archibald, Lauren Foley, student Sam Armstrong, and district families gave an overview and testimonials to their experiences working with the Watertown-Mayer Special Education department staff at all levels Birth to 18+. Data presented included a student served number of 337 for the 25-26 school year, the amounts WM was able to recoup for services through MA billing, anticipating a response to a recent 'We Can Ride' therapy grant, the implementation and positive response to new curriculum, the Unified team , and the high quality of teaching staff, paraprofessional staff, and career coaching happening in the Watertown-Mayer SPED department.

V. **Action Items -**

A. MMS Onell and Burns to approve Resolution 27.04 Acknowledging Donations, Contributions, & Fundraising received so far in the month of September. Passes 7-0.

B. Superintendent Schuler and CESO/ WM Business Manager, Lauren Syrup presented the information re: the 2026 Payable 2027 Levy Certification. Questions were asked and answered. MMS Burns and Danielson to approve the following amounts and percentages for the proposed levy:

2025 Pay 2026 Levy Limitation- $7,944,405.43
2026 Pay 2027 Levy Limitation - $7,899,281.49
This is a decrease of $45,123.94 / 0.57%

Passes 7-0.

C. MMS Onell and Guetzkow to approve the first and only read of district policies: 404F, 412, 416, 416F, 417, 418, 418F, 419, 420, 421, 422, 624, 208, 613, 621, 709, and 721. Director Neaton drew attention to the change in

Policy 613 granting high school diplomas to veterans. Superintendent Schuler informed the Board that the dollar amount added to Policy 721 was also determined with consultation with Business Manager, Lauren Syrup. Passes 7-0.

VI. Review/ Information Items:

A. SMX project manager, Chris Rear gave his update to the roofing projects throughout the district. Noted was that all building permits were finally obtained, but that the delays have set the project back by about 30 days. He is still optimistic regardless of this and weather delays that the entire project will be completed by mid-December.

B. Superintendent Schuler presented to the Board the district's appreciation to the Watertown-Mayer school board members and presented certificates of appreciation and years of service on behalf of the district and the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA).

VII. Administrative Reports

HS Principal Hennen reported a busy start of the school year and noted 30 new students to the high school this year. Mr. Hennen reported that the new Online Academy has 18 students and is overall going well for the first year. Questions were asked and answered re: reasons for the new enrollments (transferring from parochial and other schools, the many options for classes and activities provided to WM students) and goal for enrollment for the Online Academy next year (goal to be at 30 next year to continue to retain and meet the needs of students).

MS Principal Guertin reported that they have had a great start to the year with the first 30 days focusing on routines and relationships. Mr. Guertin noted that the sharing of staff with the high school has provided a positive response as there are increases of electives for 7th and 8th grade students. Mr. Guertin is adopting a similar focus as the high school did last year re: the development of Reflective Practice Teams (RPT) to support professional development of teachers. Noted was the MS student council and their hard work to make homecoming a fun and positive experience for the student body as a whole.

ES Principal Hansen reported a 98% attendance rate for Royal Connections before the beginning of the year. Teachers continue to report their support of this format to get to know families, have open and private conversations with parents re: their students' needs and helping to contribute to a smooth transition into the school year. Ms. Hansen reported that over 25 ES staff attended the recent Educator's Appreciation Dinner hosted by our local Watertown Chamber of Commerce, that 2 of the now 3 recess coaches were able to participate in a PlayWorks workshop, and that they worked with Koch bus and are actively working with the Watertown Fire Department for both bus safety and fire prevention weeks. Ms. Hansen was happy to report the new Behavior Interventionist, Cecily Findler, and is looking forward to the upcoming Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day coming up on October 7th.

Community Ed Director, Tim Dalton reported that they have worked with the advisory committee to come up with 8 priorities for the Community Learning Center

based on the 8 strategic commitments of the district. Mr. Dalton noted that their Winter/Spring catalog will be coming soon and they are looking into adding an electronic/ moto/ bike safety class as this seems to be a community need. Mr. Dalton noted that the courtyard playground is now complete and that our youngest students are loving it.

Teaching & Learning Director Vieau reported that the math curriculum is on this year's review cycle. Mr. Vieau reported that they have completed FAST testing and 13 of the 18 class averages are higher than the last 9 years of averages. As of today's date the test scores for MCAs were still embargoed and he hopes to present these results at the next board meeting. He is working with the administrative team and staff on moving the new teaching evaluation model to an electronic format and that this has started and is going well..

Superintendent Schuler discussed enrollment numbers and his work with Lauren Syrup to identify some positive trends. October 1st is the first reporting of enrollment to the state. Mr. Schuler reported his challenge to the administrative team to 'Lead Unreasonably' - taking on more of a hospitality mentality in how we approach our families and our community. Administrators have been asked to reach out to new families to the district to find out more about why they chose WM and what is setting us apart. Superintendent Schuler then gave a shout out to WMEF for their recent fall gala to raise funds for our students. Board Clerk Danielson followed with a shoutout to the 7 pilots who did the flyover as part of the Salute to Service game as well as the football players, coaches, and cheerleaders from 1986 who celebrated the 40th anniversary of their state championship.

VIII. Board Member Reports

Treasurer Schulz discussed matters of SW Metro, and Chair Feldt discussed matters of MSBA, his recent trip to DC as a member of MSBA and our board, the Permanent School Fund, the upcoming MSBA Leadership conference in January 2027, and the upcoming concerns from legislative entities that will look to reduce or eliminate funds for mental health, E-rate, and Special Education.

IX. Adjournment

MMS Schulz and Danielson to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 PM and was duly passed.

_____	_____	10.26.26
Chair	Clerk	Date