SWEET HOME CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2026

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Sweet Home Board of Education was held on Tuesday, November 17, 2026, at Maplemere Elementary School. President of the Board, Mr. Laible, called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

Mr. Laible led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PRESENT: Scott Johnson, Dirk Rabenold, Marianne Jasen, Amy Battaglia, Brian Laible, Danyelle Anthon

ABSENT: Jessica Stephens

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the Board of Education accepted the roll as called.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

MOTION TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the meeting was adjourned to executive session at 5:08 pm for matters related to a student matter covered by FERPA as well as collective negotiations.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the following resolution was offered to come out of executive session at 6:05 pm. Action was taken during the executive session.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the following resolution was offered:

RESOLVED: That, the agenda set forth for the Board of Education voting meeting held Tuesday, November 17, 2026, is hereby adopted in its entirety.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

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MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the following resolution was offered:

RESOLVED: That, the reading of the minutes of the Board of Education meetings held Tuesday, October 20, 2026, and Wednesday, November 4, 2026, be waived and are hereby adopted in their entirety.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Course Planning Guide

Lisa LaBrake and Brian Koziol gave an update to the Board of Education on the addition of media studies courses to the high school course planning guide at the regular meeting on Tuesday, November 17, 2026.

B. Maplemere Building Project Update

Dr. Ginestre and the project team presented an update on the Maplemere building project, including the scope, schedule, and renderings for a six-classroom addition (including three STEM classrooms and an exceptional-education classroom, with space for UPK) and additional parking and a bus loop. The project is expected to go out to bid in February 2027, with construction contracts awarded between March and May 2027, substantial completion by August 2028, and student occupancy in September 2028.

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the Board of Education opened a public question-and-answer session of up to 30 minutes regarding the Maplemere building project.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

Public Question-and-Answer Summary: Five community members participated, including Kevin Maria, Lisa Maria, and Gail of Cindy Drive. Mr. and Mrs. Maria, whose home backs up to the proposed parking lot and bus loop, asked whether the District had formally evaluated alternative locations, how the lot would affect drainage and stormwater runoff (citing past flooding), and whether the impacts on privacy, noise, property values, and snow and salt runoff had been considered. They also said that affected neighbors were not directly notified or invited into the planning process, and asked that the Board review alternate configurations and provide a written explanation of why any alternative was not feasible. Another resident asked about adding trees or other landscaping as a buffer.

District administration and the project team responded that the addition and bus loop were sited near the existing UPK, exceptional-education classroom, and related services so that small buses can drop students off close to the building; that other locations were considered

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT-continued…

but were not feasible for cost and access reasons; that the plan resulted from a multi-year process involving the building committee, user groups, and architects, followed by a community vote in favor of the capital project; and that the project is under State Education Department review. They acknowledged the residents' concerns, said they could not make promises but would take the input into consideration, and noted that landscaping to buffer the lot is under consideration. They also described the District's outreach through newsletters, PTA meetings, and community walk-throughs, and acknowledged that residents without children in the schools may not have received the information.

A neighboring resident who lives behind the school spoke in support of the District's decision, noting that drainage concerns affect yards throughout the neighborhood and that the decisions were made with care. Another resident asked whether answers to questions raised at Board meetings could be posted online, such as in an FAQ; it was noted that agendas and approved minutes are posted on the District website, and the suggestion was noted by the Board.

C. Superintendent's Report

Michael Ginestre, Superintendent of Schools, gave an update to the Board of Education at the regular meeting on Tuesday, November 17, 2026, including thanks to the Maplemere PTA, the donation from Costco of 500 backpacks and a $1,000 gift card, the December 4th Dollars for Scholars Meat Raffle, and information on the disabled veteran and senior citizen school tax exemptions, which the Board will revisit in December.

D. Board Goals

The Board discussed the four proposed goals for the 2026-2027 school year: (1) deepening the Board's understanding of the strategic plan and Portrait of a Graduate and establishing a system for monitoring student progress; (2) student engagement; (3) fiscal stewardship and the capital project; and (4) communicating the Board's role and work to the community. Two amendments were made.

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Rabenold, it was moved to amend Goal 3 to replace the reference to the Sweet Home Education Association with "collective bargaining units."

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, it was moved to amend Goal 4 to change the date of November 30, 2026 to January 31, 2027, and the date of December 31, 2026 to February 28, 2027.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

The goals, as amended, were approved under New Business item M.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT-continued…

E. Board Self-Evaluation

The Board reviewed the results of its annual self-evaluation by standard and discussed areas rated as developing, including monitoring progress with data and clarity around Board protocol.

OPEN SESSION - AGENDA TOPICS - POLICY 1510

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the following resolution was offered for agenda items A, B, C, D, F, H, I, J, K, L, and M.

A. Special Education

1. Class placements for 2026-2027 - Policy #7613

Whereas, Public Law 94-142, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, and Chapter 853, Laws of 1976 (New York State Education Act), requires Board of Education approval for all placements of students with disabilities, and

Whereas, the District Committee on Special Education has reviewed all placements, and

Whereas, all parents have approved said special education class placements, now therefore be it

Resolved: That, the 2026-2027 placements for students with disabilities be approved as recommended in a memorandum to Michael V. Ginestre, Superintendent of Schools, dated November 2, 2026.

2. Preschool class placements for 2026-2027 - Policy #7614

Whereas, Public Law 94-142, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, as amended by P.L. 99-457, New York State Compliance, Chapter 243 of the Laws of 1989, requires Board of Education approval for all placements of preschool students with disabilities, and

Whereas, the District Committee on Preschool Special Education has reviewed all placements, and

Whereas, all parents have approved said preschool special education placements, now therefore be it

Resolved: That, the 2026-2027 placements for preschool students with disabilities be approved as recommended in a memorandum to Michael V. Ginestre, Superintendent of Schools, dated November 2, 2026.

and be it further…

B. Monthly Financial Reports - Policy #2140

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accept the Investment Schedule, the Treasurer's Report, the Budget Appropriation Status Report, the Revenue Budget Status Report, the Budget Transfer Report, and the Extra-Curricular Account Report as provided.

and be it further…

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NEW BUSINESS-continued…

C. Dispose of Obsolete Property - Policy 5250

RESOLVED: That, the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, authorize the district to participate in competitive bidding procedures for the disposal of obsolete property.

and be it further…

D. Sweet Home Girls Wrestling

RESOLVED: That, the Sweet Home Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, agrees to allow the combining of schools with Amherst Central School District, Tonawanda City School District, and the Cheektowaga Central School District for the sport of Girls' Wrestling for the 2026-2027 school year.

and be it further…

F. Appointments

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following appointment as provided:

Immigrant Student Rights Liaison - Dr. Michael Ginestre

and be it further…

H. Suspension Appeal

WHEREAS, the Parent/Guardian on behalf of their child #810274 timely filed an appeal with the Sweet Home Board of Education pursuant to Board Policy 7313 contesting the District's suspension determination; and

WHEREAS, the Board reviewed the record of suspension in executive session to maintain the confidentiality of this matter; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board denies the appeal. The Superintendent or his designee shall send notice of this decision to the Parent.

and be it further…

I. Resolution Urging Congress to Fulfill Its Promise to Fund 40 Percent of IDEA Costs

A Resolution of the Sweet Home Central School District School Board Urging the United States Congress to Fulfill its Longstanding Commitment to Fund 40 Percent of Special Education Costs Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

WHEREAS, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was enacted in 1975 to ensure that students with disabilities receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE); and

WHEREAS, Congress made a clear commitment in IDEA to fund 40 percent of the cost to educate students to help cover the excess costs of providing special education services; and

WHEREAS, despite this longstanding promise, federal IDEA funding has consistently fallen far short in 2026 providing just 10 percent of the cost—leaving state, local school districts, and taxpayers to subsidize the federal government's unmet obligation; and

WHEREAS, students covered by IDEA have grown exponentially from 3.7 million in 1975 to 8.3 million students today; and

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NEW BUSINESS-continued…

I. Resolution Urging Congress to Fulfill Its Promise to Fund 40 Percent of IDEA Costs

WHEREAS, New York State school districts collectively face a statewide special education shortfall of hundreds of millions annually, requiring local districts to redirect general education revenues to meet mandated special education needs; and

WHEREAS, the federal funding shortfall places significant and increasing pressure on local budgets, widens funding imbalances among school districts, undermines general education programs, and forces reductions in staffing, class size initiatives, mental health support, and their essential student services; and

WHEREAS, fulfilling the federal promise of 40 percent IDEA funding would provide substantial relief to New York State school districts, reduce reliance on local levies, stabilize district budgets, and strengthen educational outcomes for all students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board of Sweet Home Central School District hereby urges the United States Congress to:

1. Fulfill its statutory commitment to fund 40 percent of IDEA special education costs through a multi-year glide path;
2. Support annual increases in IDEA appropriations that meaningfully reduce the federal funding shortfall;
3. Ensure IDEA funding remains stable and protected from across-the-board cuts.
4. Publicly reaffirm the federal government's responsibility to fully fund (40%) mandated special education services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board President and Superintendent are directed to share this resolution with:

- Members of the New York State congressional delegation;
- New York State School Boards Association;
- NYS Commissioner of Education, Dr. Betty A. Rosa; and
- NYS Legislators representing the Sweet Home Central School District

ADOPTED by the School Board of Sweet Home Central School District on this 17th day of November 2026

and be it further…

J. Grant of Easement to Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation and Verizon New York, Inc.

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the grant of easement to Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation and Verizon New York, Inc. for the purpose and at the location as presented.

and be it further…

K. Acceptance of Donations

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accept the following donations for our Sweet Home Family Support Center:

- 500 Backpacks from Costco
- $1,000 gift card for use at Costco

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NEW BUSINESS-continued…

and be it further…

L. Extracurricular Activity Account - Policy 7410

The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the following extracurricular activities accounts be opened.

RESOLVED: That, the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to take the appropriate action regarding the following extracurricular activities accounts.

ACCOUNTS TO BE OPENED: Drama Club

NEW BUSINESS-continued…

M. Board of Education Goals

RESOLVED: That, the Board of Education approves the goals set forth for the Board of Education for the 2026-2027 school year.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

Mr. Rabenold requested that agenda items E and G be removed from the consolidated motion and voted on separately.

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the following resolution was offered for agenda item E.

E. Revised Policy - Policy 1410 - Second Reading

Board of Education By-Law #1410 states that "Board of Education policy and rules and by-laws shall be adopted, amended and/or suspended…only when the addition, amendments or suspension is first introduced in writing and is subsequently moved and seconded at a public meeting at least 27 calendar days prior to the time when such adoption, amendment and/or suspension may be voted upon."

At the regular Board of Education meeting held on November 17, 2026, the Superintendent of Schools recommends the Board of Education accept the second reading of the following revised policies.

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following policies as provided in the November 17, 2026 presentation.

a. 7135 – Safeguarding the Rights of Immigrant Students

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	5	No	1	Absent	1
Carried	X				

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Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the following resolution was offered for agenda item G.

G. Revised Policy - Policy 1410 - First Reading

Board of Education By-Law #1410 states that "Board of Education policy and rules and by-laws shall be adopted, amended and/or suspended…only when the addition, amendments or suspension is first introduced in writing and is subsequently moved and seconded at a public meeting at least 27 calendar days prior to the time when such adoption, amendment and/or suspension may be voted upon."

At the regular Board of Education meeting held on November 17, 2026, the Superintendent of Schools recommends the Board of Education accept the first reading of the following revised policies.

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following revised policies as provided in the November 17, 2026 presentation.

a. 3275 – Use of District Trademark-Service Marks

b. 4321 – Board Protocol

c. 5676 – Privacy and Security for Student Data

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	5	No	1	Absent	1
Carried	X				

STUDENT EX-OFFICIO REPORT

B. Plath - Reported that the student government voted on its cabinet and formed committees (athletics, academic and student life, diversity and inclusion, arts, technology, and student safety), each of which set goals for the school year. He noted that Halloween spirit week drew the most participation in the costume contest since it began, and thanked Brianna Brown, Mr. Turner (who helped fund prizes), and Ms. Dauria (who helped share information). He also reported that the first DEI meeting went well.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

M. Jasen - Attended the NYSSBA convention and reported on good conversations that helped her better understand the Portrait of a Graduate and how the District can make sure students are academically prepared.

S. Johnson - Also attended the state school boards convention, calling it a great convention, and noted he took a list of ideas from it to bring to future meetings. He discussed with K. Barillari a program he learned about where students earn an associate's degree along with their high school diploma, and expressed interest in visiting it.

D. Rabenold - Attended a convention session on communication with the community, noting its message that districts should be more actively engaged with the community, including staff, not less.

B. Laible - Attended the Board leadership training, which he found excellent. He noted that another district features a section on its website highlighting its successes, and suggested Sweet Home can do a better job of sharing its own, such as the capital project and its many programs.

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PERSONNEL

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the following resolution was offered for consent agenda on personnel items I and II:

I. TEACHING & ADMINISTRATIVE

RESOLVED: That the following *discontinuances* in the **TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 755 dated November 17, 2026,** be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A.1.a. Retirement Resignation
Keli Koran Luchey
Lisa Brzeczkowski

A.1.b. Resignation
Elham Dehghanipour
Benjamin Morton

RESOLVED: That the following *appointments* in the **TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 755 dated November 17, 2026,** be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A.2.a. Regular Appointment
Jessi Donner

A.2.c. Encumbered
Mya Sciolino

A.2.d. Mentor
Katelyn DiRosa
Julia Taboni
Michelle Schmitt

A.2.g. Leave of Absence
Andrea Wodarczak
Emma Ruggiero
Sarah Nowak
Lauren Mastracci
Tanya Barbic
Danielle Kawa
Kerri Iraci

A.2.h. Reinstatement from Leave
Michelle Schmitt
Kailee Fitzpatrick
Lori Roth
Melinda Calandra
Andrea Wodarczak
Gavin Petrie

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PERSONNEL-continued…

I. TEACHING & ADMINISTRATIVE

A.2.j. Co-curricular
Jadon Wegrzyn (Remove)
Jadon Wegrzyn

B.2.a. Substitute Long-Term Appointments
Joseph Lucenti
Amy Lipowski
Heidi Muck
Owen Van Dewater

B.2.b. Substitute teachers for the 2026-2027 school year
RESOLVED: That the *substitutes* in the **TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 755 dated November 17, 2026,** be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

B.2.c. Student teachers for 2026-2027 school year
RESOLVED: That the *student teachers* in the **TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 755 dated November 17, 2026,** be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

C.1. Interscholastic Appointments
Mia Stefeler
Patrick Mix
Sarah Wright
Tomaris Bell

II. SERVICE

RESOLVED: That the following *discontinuances* in the **SERVICE SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 755 dated November 17, 2026,** be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A.1.a. Retirement Resignation
Thomas Rackl
Barbara Sweet

A.1.b. Resignation
David Annas
Ayana Campagna
Noel Carretero
Caleb Dabney
Rochelle Drake
Joseph Emmerling
Lisa Jones
Joseph Rice

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PERSONNEL-continued…

II. SERVICE

A.1.b. Resignation
Carla Semaan
Crystal Still
Dylan Walker
Jennifer Williams

A.1.c. Termination
Ralph Gregory

RESOLVED: That the following *appointments* in the **SERVICE SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 755 dated November 17, 2026,** be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A.2.a. Regular Appointment
David Annas
Rodney Carmichael
Rochelle Drake
Quinn Edholm
Liberty Genovese
Maria Koehler
Toni Morales
Noemi Sepulveda
Dylan Walker

A.2.c. Permanent Civil Service
Andrew Herb
Alexis Swanson

A.2.f. Leave of Absence
Gul Turk (Change)
Ravyn Adams
Ariel Carlino
Roxanne Genau
David Holm
Jeffery Lawson
Jerry Mohr
Mirvat Rizeq

A.2.g. Reinstatement from Leave
Ayana Campagna
Maria Ginsburg
Donald Lilly
John Shields
Estella Slaughter
Gul Turk

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PERSONNEL-continued…

II. SERVICE

A.2.g. Reinstatement from Leave

Brian White
Jeffrey Lawson
Karen Kneitinger

B.2. Per Diem Substitutes for 2026-2027 school year

RESOLVED: That the *per diem substitutes* in the **TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 755 dated November 17, 2026,** be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Anthon, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.

The vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Yes	6	No	0	Absent	1
Carried	X				

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Falon Derion
Secretary, Board of Education
District Clerk
Sweet Home Central School District

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