LITTLE FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

LITTLE FALLS, NEW JERSEY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: Tuesday September 15, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. FLAG SALUTE

III. PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

In accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Public Meetings Act, the Little Falls Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by notifying the Board's official newspaper, the local parent-teacher associations, and posting same on the Community Bulletin Board and the District's Website.

IV. ROLL CALL

	Yes	No	Abstain/Absent
Ms. Janine Barone	✓		
Ms. Desiree DiBuono	✓		
Ms. Patricia Lijoi	✓		
Ms. Nicole Smith			✓ ABSENT
Mr. Michael Tullo	✓		
Ms. Shannon Zurbruegg	✓		
Dr. Rachel Capizzi	✓		

V. CORRESPONDENCE-None

VI. MINUTES

MOVE that the Little Falls Board of Education approve the Minutes of the following Meeting.

1. Regular Meeting – August 18, 2026

M: Mrs. DiBuono S: Mr. Tullo

VII. OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC – (**Limited to Agenda Items Only**)
M: Mrs. Zurbruegg: S: Mr. Tullo

VIII. PRESENTATION-
Mrs. Marinelli present challenge coins to the following exceptional community members.

- Adam Quazza
- Izabella Symonds
- Giovanni Caputo

IX. PRESIDENT'S REPORT- Dr. Capizzi

X. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Mrs. Tracey Marinelli)

1. Superintendent's Report. **(Exhibit A)**

Mrs. Marinelli advised the Board of the following:

- There are zero suspension and zero HIB
- Education Insider Magazine named Little Falls the top district of 2026.
- The district will resume its regular community outreach sessions.
- Emergency Safety drills have been performed in all three schools.
- To eliminate traffic congestion students must be picked up prior to the 15 minute window before school dismissal, otherwise they must wait until dismissal.
- Mobile push notifications have been activated on the district app.
- An upcoming presentation at New Jersey School Boards Association focusing on AI tool.

XI. BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY REPORT-(Melissa Sanzari-Stevens)

Mrs. Stevens advised the Board of the following:

- Roof replacements at School #2 and School #3 have reached the final punch list phase. Renovation work on the art room, restrooms, and stairs is scheduled for completion within two weeks
- Projections indicate a significant increase in health benefits rates for 2027. To absorb these costs the district has restructured its payroll administration from a dedicated position to a stipend model, yielding over $65,000.00 in savings to reallocate toward benefit increases.

XII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- The Building and Ground committee discussed expanding green spaces across all three schools.

XIII. SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

1. WHEREAS, on March 24, 2026, the Little Falls Board of Education awarded Accurate Construction original bid for Art Room, Toilets & Stairs the total contract lump sum of $644,900.00; and

   WHEREAS, changes are necessary in order for the project to be completed; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, the Little Falls Board of Education approves the following change orders to Accurate Construction in the amount of $3,000.00 for discrepancy in stair count, this change order includes all labor and material:

   WHEREAS, changes are necessary in order for the project to be completed; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, the Little Falls Board of Education approves the following change orders to Accurate Construction in the amount of $15,785.96 for additional LVT flooring to be installed at first floors in stairs B,C,D and second floor of stairs D. This change order is inclusive of additional labor and materials to remove the existing flooring and install LVT flooring:

WHEREAS, changes are necessary in order for the project to be completed;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, the Little Falls Board of Education approves the following change orders to Accurate Construction in the amount of $3,973.20 includes additional labor and material cost to install a new exterior concrete pad for the art room condensing unit;

SUBTOTAL	$22,759.16
Less Owners Discretionary Allowance	($78,255.58)
Allowance Available For Use	($55,496.42)

• Original Contract Amount	$662,590.00
• Net Change By Previous Orders	$ 0.00
• Revised Contract Amount Prior to Change Order	$662,590.00
• Total Cost of This Change Order	$ 0.00
• Revised Contract Amount	$662,590.00

2. The Little Falls Board of Education rescind the appointment of Niurka Martinez, paraprofessional.

3. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the appointment of Giana Irizarry, paraprofessional, step 1, September 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, pending all background check.

M:Mrs. Barone S: Mrs. Zurbruegg

	Yes	No	Abstain/Absent
Ms. Janine Barone	✓		
Ms. Desiree DiBuono	✓		
Ms. Patricia Lijoi	✓		
Ms. Nicole Smith			✓ Absent
Mr. Michael Tullo	✓		
Ms. Shannon Zurbruegg	✓		
Dr. Rachel Capizzi	✓		

XIV. CONSENT AGENDA

M: Mr. Tullo S: Mrs. Zurbruegg

	Yes	No	Abstain/Absent
Ms. Janine Barone	✓		C-1 Abstain
Ms. Desiree DiBuono	✓		C-1 Abstain
Ms. Patricia Lijoi	✓		
Ms. Nicole Smith			✓ Absent
Mr. Michael Tullo	✓		
Ms. Shannon Zurbruegg	✓		

Dr. Rachel Capizzi	✓		

RESOLUTIONS FOR CONSENT AGENDA (XIV)

Be IT RESOLVED, UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS in conjunction with the Business Administrator/Board Secretary move that the following actions be taken:

A. **PERSONNEL, NEGOTIATIONS, AND FINANCE**

1. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the list of bills dated September 15, 2026, Warrant No.'s # 32571 thru #32675(Current Account) totaling $1,173,866.77; Wire Transfer #09102026 (Health Insurance)totaling $ 379,498.85_ Warrant No. #1382 thru #1385 (voided 1383) (Cafeteria Account) totaling $10,689.29 ; Warrant #1116 thru 1118 (Before & After Care Account) totaling $115.27; Wire Transfers #08262026& 09022026 (Postage) totaling $300.00; Wire transfer 8122026 (PCIA) totaling $1,450,844.98 be paid if, properly sworn to and funds are available in accordance with Board of Education Policy and to be appended to the minutes of this meeting. The School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11I3, certifies that no line-item account has encumbrances and expenditures, which in total exceed the line-item appropriation in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a) and the Board of Education, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c)4, certifies that after review of the Board Secretary's & Treasurer's –monthly financial reports that no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(b). Further, the Board of Education and the Business Administrator/Board Secretary certify that major accounts/fund balances have not been over-expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. (Exhibit B)

2. The Little Falls Board of Education authorize the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary's action of making transfers prior to the Board Meeting as per the attached August 31, 2026 Transfer Report. (Exhibit B-1)

3. The Little Falls Board of Education accept the Treasurer and Secretary's Reports for the month ending August 31, 2026**.** (Exhibit C)

4. WHEREAS, on April 21, 2026 the Little Falls Board of Education awarded Northeastern Interior Services, original bid for School #1 BOE Office Renovations in the total contract lump sum of $1,017,000.00; and

WHEREAS, changes are necessary in order for the project to be completed;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, the Little Falls Board of Education approves the following change orders to Northeastern Interior services in the amount of

$3,184.50.00,additional work required to rework the domestic water lines with new isolation valves for existing corridor faculty toilet;

SUBTOTAL	$3,184.50
Less Owners Discretionary Allowance	($75,000.00)
Allowance Available For Use	($71,815.00)

• Original Contract Amount	$1,017,000.00
• Net Change By Previous Orders	$ 0.00
• Revised Contract Amount Prior to Change Order	$1,017,000.00
• Total Cost of This Change Order	$ 0.00
• Revised Contract Amount	$1,017,000.00

5. WHEREAS, on March 24, 2026 the Little Falls Board of Education awarded Arco Construction original bid for Schools #2 & #3 Roof Replacement in the total contract lump sum of $1,774,000.00; and

WHEREAS, changes are necessary in order for the project to be completed;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, the Little Falls Board of Education approves the following change orders to Arco Construction in the amount of $24,113.00, additional work required to address existing field conditions and water infiltration system at School #3, including a new roofing system, fascia work, selected soffit painting, and localized mortar repairs near the second floor bathroom windows;

SUBTOTAL	$24,113.00
Less Owners Discretionary Allowance	($112,920.00)
Allowance Available For Use	($88,807.00)

• Original Contract Amount	$1,774,000.00
• Net Change By Previous Orders	$ 0.00
• Revised Contract Amount Prior to Change Order	$1,774,000.00
• Total Cost of This Change Order	$ 0.00
• Revised Contract Amount	$1,774,000.00

6. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the following out of district placement for student 2002698 at The Flex School for the 2026-2027 School Year in the amount of $104,993.00.

7. The Little Falls Board of Education authorize the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary to submit the attached bills list dated through August 18, 2026, to the trustee M&T Bank, for the purpose of the Passaic County improvement Authority Project (PCIA). (Exhibit D)

8. The Little Falls Board of Education accept the resignation of Ariana Avdija, Payroll Coordinator, effective October 26, 2026.

9. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the appointment of Chuttan Malique, paraprofessional, step 1, September 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, pending all background check.

10. The Little Falls Board of Education rescind the following personnel as a substitute Lunchroom/ Playground Aide for the 2026-2027 school year

Joyce Cancel
Jaclyn Cali

10. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the following staff member and rate effective, September 1, 2026 through April 30, 2027 for the 2026-2027 school year.

Mentor	Provisional Teacher	School	Certificate	Rate	Weeks
Kelly Ostrowski	Jackie Cruz	School #3	CEAS	$550.00	30 weeks

11. The Little Falls Board of Education approve travel/conference expenses as noted for the following district employees/board members: (Exhibit E)

12. The Little Falls Board of Education approve payment to all Little Falls School #1 staff to monitor Hornet Reflection at a rate of $35.00 per hour, to be paid out of Title IV, account number 20-280-100-101-10-00. Coverage not to exceed a yearly amount of $3,000.00.

13. The Little Falls Board of Education approve payment to Shana Opdenberg, or any appointed staff member, to attend monthly Library meetings as a liaison, at a rate of $42.50 per hour.

14. The Little Falls Board of Education approve travel expenses as noted for the following district employees and Board Members for the NJSBA Conference being held OCTOBER 19-21, 2026:

NAME	WORKSHOP/LOCATION	DATE	ESTIMATED COST (Mileage/Meal Conference)
Melissa Sanzari-Stevens Tracey Marinelli Janine Barone Dana Sprague	NJSBA Workshop	10/19-10/21/2026 10/19-10/21/2026	$16.80 Tolls $122.20 mileage $ 2,200.00 Group Registration Atlantic City, NJ $68.00 Meals Overnight Stay $51.00 Meals 1st & Last day of travel for each

NAME	WORKSHOP/LOCATION	DATE	ESTIMATED COST Mileage/Meals Conference
Melissa Sanzari-Stevens Tracey Marinelli	NJSBA Workshop	10/19-10/21/2026	$115.00 Hotel Accommodations

Janine Barone		per night, each Attendee
Dana Sprague	10/19-10/21/2026	+ applicable taxes & fees

15. APPROVE LITTLE FALLS ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATION CONTRACT 2026-27; 2027-28; 2028-29;2029-30; &2030-31

WHEREAS, the Little Falls Board of Education and the Little Falls Administrators' Association ("Association") have negotiated a successor collective negotiations agreement ("Successor CNA") for the 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 school years.

WHEREAS, the Association has, by a majority vote of its membership, ratified the Agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby ratifies and approves the Successor CNA for the for the 2026-27; 2027-28; 2028-29;2029-30; &2030-31 school years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby authorizes the Board President and the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to execute on behalf of the Board, the Agreement by and between the Board and the Association. (Exhibit F)

16. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the job description for Superintendent/ Curriculum Director effective September 15, 2026. (Exhibit G)

17. The Little Falls Board of Education amend the following job descriptions: (Exhibit H)

Purchasing and Accounts Payable Coordinator
Assistant to the Business Administrator/Board Secretary

18. The Little Falls Board of Education amend the re-appointment of Assistant to the Business Administrator. (Exhibit I)

19. The Little Falls Board of Education amend the re-appointment of Purchasing and Accounts Payable Coordinator. (Exhibit J)

20. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the following payroll stipend as attached. (Exhibit K)

21. The Little Falls Board of Education approve/ratify University Spine Center, 504 Valley Road Suite 203 Wayne, NJ, to provide scoliosis screening for fifth grade students at School #1, at no charge to the district.

22. The Little Falls Board of Education amend the following for the Before and After Care-The Hive, staff members. All staff members can serve as substitutes for the Before and Aftercare program. (Exhibit L)

23. The Little Falls Board of Education approve Bergen County Special Services School District Educational Enterprise Division to provide Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing services for student 2002582 at a rate not to exceed $510.00, for the 2026-2027 school year.

24. The Little Falls Board of Education approve payment to hourly personnel, for Safe School Training. Payment will not exceed three hours, paid at the employee's hourly rate when training is completed.

25. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the reappointment of staff as per the attached exhibit for the 2026/2027 School year. (Exhibit M)

B. EDUCATION AND STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE

1. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the following William Paterson University student for clinical practice I and II (student teaching) to be performed for the 2026-2027 School year.

   Emily Wynne

2. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the Little Falls Board of Education Board Goals and Objectives.
   The Board Goals were presented by Dr. Capizzi:

   1. Provide policy and finding to support district goals
   2. Support each school's continuation and expansion of Portrait of a Hornet initiative.
   3. Support administration in ensuring timely and proper progress of the district-wide Facilities Improvement Plan.
   4. Work together as a board with internal and external stakeholders to ensure communication of Improvement Plan progress to regularly to the Little Falls community for transparency and to encourage engagement.

3. The Little Falls Board of Education approve that all Teachers, other certified staff, and Paraprofessionals are being evaluated using the Danielson Rubric Evaluation Tool, for the 2026-2027 school year and have been trained on the rubric.

4. The Little Falls Board of Education approve that all Administrators have been trained on evaluating staff using the Danielson Rubric Evaluation Tool, for the 2026-2027 school year.

5. The Little Falls Board of Education approve that all Administrators are being evaluated using the NJ Principal Evaluation for Professional Learning Observation Instrument, for the 2026-2027 school year.

6. The Little Falls Board of Education approve that all Administrators have been trained on the NJ Principal Evaluation for Professional Learning Observation Instrument, for the 2026-2027 school year.

7. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the submission the district's Statement of Assurance Regarding the Paraprofessional Staff for the academic year 2026-2027 to the county office.

8. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the School Nursing Services Plans for School #1, #2 and #3 for the 2026-2027 School Year, as circulated.

9. The Little Falls Board of Education approve all Little Falls School District Certified Personnel to provide home instruction services to district students at a rate of $53.00 per hour, to be paid out of account number 11-150-100-101-00-00.

10. Little Falls Board of Education approve/ratify the following new substitute applicants all substitutes have filed Federal Form I-9, and are in possession of acceptable clearance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1/18A:39-10.1/18A:6-4.14, pending all background checks.

    Devon Garrabrant

11. That the Little Falls Board of Education approve the following field trips: (Exhibit N)

C. **MAINTENANCE, BUILDING & GROUNDS AND REFERENDUM COMMITTEE**

1. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the use of district facilities by the following community groups who have filed the proper application form and have submitted proof of necessary insurance coverage: * approve/ratify

School #1

Date	Event	Location and Time	Requested By:	Cost
9/1510/21,11/18,12/16,1/20, 2/17,3/17,4/21,5/19/26	LFEF Meeting	Room Cafeteria 6:30-8:00pm	LFEF	$0.00
10/1/2026	PTA Mum Sale	Playground 2:00pm-6:30pm	S#1 PTA	0.00

School #2

Date	Event	Location and Time	Requested By:	Cost
*9/12/2026	PVHS Marching Band Parking	Parking Lot 2:00pm-7:00pm	PVHS	0.00

School #3

Date	Event	Location and Time	Requested By:	Cost
9/15,10/20,11/17,12/15,1/19, 2/9,3/16,4/20,5/18,6/8/2027	Girl Scouts	Art Room 5:30pm-7:00pm	Girl Scouts	0.00

2. RESOLVED, to approve the disposal of the attached equipment found to be obsolete. (Exhibit O)

D. **HEALTH, SAFETY AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

1. The Little Falls Board of Education approve the following transportation waivers in accordance with N.J.S.A18A:391c and District Policy number 8613.

Student ID # 2003268

XV. PTA LIAISONS

- School 2/3 PTA will host a clothing drive on Saturday September 19, 2026 from 9:00am-1:00pm in the School #2 upper lot.
- School #1 PTA is currently running a mums fundraiser

XVI. LITTLE FALLS EDUCATION FOUNDATION LIAISON

- LFEF held a family bowling Bash and silent auction in place of its traditional Oktoberfest event. Upcoming LFEF events include a Tricky Tray in November 2026 and Casino Night in February.

XVII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ NEW BUSINESS

XVIII. OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC
M: Mrs. Zurbruegg S: Mr. Tullo

XIX. EXECUTIVE SESSION- None

XX. ADJOURNMENT
M: Mrs. Barone S: Mrs. Smith

6:21 PM

AYES: 6
NAYES: 0
ABSENT:1

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Sanzari-Stevens

Melissa Sanzari- Stevens
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

LITTLE FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

LITTLE FALLS, NEW JERSEY

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: Tuesday September 15, 2026