



Expect
More.

First 30 Days: Building the Stillwater Experience

School Board Study Session
Sept. 8, 2026



As We Present, Be Thinking:

1

What are we learning about our ability to consistently deliver the Stillwater Experience?

2

Where should efficiency drive service decisions—and where could reductions undermine experience or enrollment?

3

Which state transportation, childcare or funding structures should become legislative priorities?

THE GOVERNANCE QUESTION:

**Are we
delivering an
experience
families will
choose and we
can sustain?**



The first weeks show both the promise of major investments and the service tradeoffs created by limited resources and state requirements.

The Board's role: Understand the evidence, name the implications and provide direction.



Strengthening the Stillwater Experience

These investments create compelling reasons for families to choose and stay with Stillwater.



NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- Kid-friendly, modern learning environments
- Enhanced safety and visibility
- Room for future enrollment
- New school identity, community pride

OAK-LAND MIDDLE REMODEL/ADDITION

- Modern, collaborative learning spaces
- Expanded spaces for student and community use
- Capacity for future enrollment
- Refreshed school identity, community pride

Project Delayed: New Timelines

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ✓ Former media center renovation | ❑ Former gymnasium renovation to new media center |
| ✓ New gymnasium construction | ❑ Science room addition |
| | ❑ 8 classroom addition |



Strengthening the Stillwater Experience

These investments create compelling reasons for families to choose and stay with Stillwater.



ENHANCED LEARNING

- Year 2 of elementary literacy curriculum implementation
- Continued professional development in Science of Reading
- Piloting new math curriculum

NEW HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

- More elective opportunities
- Expanded college and career pathways
- Online courses
- Greater student choice and flexibility



Enrollment Is Earned Through Experience

The Stillwater Experience



Students: Safe. Challenged. Known. | **Families:** Welcomed. Informed. Confident.

Student opportunities, transportation, and childcare are part of that experience every day.



Strong Opportunities. Real Constraints.

We're implementing major improvements but operating with few resources, less margin for error

OPPORTUNITIES

- New schools and learning environments
- More high school choice and pathways
- Strong community interest in new buildings and programs
- Greater capacity to attract and retain families

CONSTRAINTS

- Budget reductions with visible service impacts
- Increased competition for students
- Rising costs and state mandates
- Complex system-wide implementation
- Less flexibility when problems emerge

We balanced the budget. The reductions required to do that have real consequences for service.



Busing Model Brings Savings and Trade-Offs

WHAT IS WORKING

- Students are getting to and from school
- Fewer buses and routes are operating
- Cost savings are being realized
- Later secondary start times were preserved
- Transfer routines are becoming more predictable
- We are adjusting quickly as issues emerge

WHAT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT

- Longer rides and earlier pickups for some students
- Limited time between tiers
- Transfer complexity and greater supervision needs
- Less flexibility for individual requests
- Changes to bus stops, walk zones, student/family experience



The question is where the service trade-offs remain manageable and where they may undermine confidence.



Busing Rules Are Not Equal

Transportation savings require deeper service reductions for our own district students.

18

communities

~150

square miles

~6,610

students transported

834

charter/nonpublic
students

DISTRICT STUDENTS

- Transportation primarily within attendance boundaries
- No transportation for alternate-enrollment situations
- ½-mile elementary walk zone
- 2-mile secondary walk zone

CHARTER + NONPUBLIC STUDENT OBLIGATIONS

- Districtwide transportation responsibility
- Service obligations established by state law
- Less local discretion to align service with district efficiency choices



Childcare Demand Exceeds Current Capacity

Staffing, not space, is limiting access for families

900

students enrolled

118

students on the waitlist

11+

additional staff needed

WHY IT MATTERS

Childcare access influences whether Stillwater works for a family and can affect enrollment and retention.

WHAT LIMITS GROWTH

Hiring, workforce conditions and state requirements make it difficult to expand, even where space is available.



First 30 Days Reveal Momentum and Risk

Families have stronger reasons to choose Stillwater as well as clear pressure points that weaken their experience

PROMISE

To inspire curiosity
and the love of
learning in every
child.

EXPERIENCE

Families judge the
whole system

CONSTRAINTS

Budget cuts,
staffing challenges,
state rules shape
service

CHOICES

Protect priorities
and advocate for
change

**Our task is to protect the Stillwater Experience while building
a service model the district can sustain.**



First 30 Days: Implementation Checkpoint

PROGRESS MONITORING SCORECARD

↑→↓	SAHS schedule	Evidence: student/staff feedback • course registrations • PSEO enrollment	Owner: Rob Bach Review: October
↑→↓	Bond Projects	Evidence: milestones against revised schedule • budget variance • operational readiness	Owner: Mark Drommerhausen Review: November
↑→↓	Transportation	Evidence: ride-time outliers • savings vs plan	Owner: Tom Risley Review: November
↑→↓	Childcare	Evidence: students served and waitlist by site • staffing vacancies • additional capacity opened	Owner: Annette Sallman Review: November
↑→↓	Enrollment	Evidence: October 1 enrollment vs. projection and prior year • resident retention/open-enrollment balance • new enrollment and withdrawal trends	Owner: Review: November
BOARD	Trigger / decision	Threshold: [risk, service standard or guardrail crossed]	Direction: [decision or support needed]

Evidence reviewed. Implications named. Next checkpoint scheduled.



Board Discussion

1

What are we learning about our ability to consistently deliver the Stillwater Experience?

2

Where should efficiency drive service decisions—and where could reductions undermine experience or enrollment?

3

Which state transportation, childcare or funding structures should become legislative priorities?

Direction | Sustainability | Advocacy