

The Sterling Jet Brief

August 2026

A summary of the Sterling School Board Meeting

The Sterling Jet Brief is designed to provide our community with a clear and concise summary of the key discussions and decisions made at each Sterling School Board meeting. Our goal is to keep you informed about the progress of our schools and to foster an open dialogue between the board and the public.

Next Meeting

Date: September 21, 2026
Time: 7:00pm
Location: Sterling Public Schools Library

The Public is welcome to attend

Our Guiding Principles

Our Mission

Sterling Public Schools will educate students to excel, prepare to compete, inspire to serve, and challenge to learn.

Our Vision

All Sterling Public Schools Students will achieve their full potential.

Sterling Board of Education

Mark Horstman, President

Julie Saathoff, Vice President

Mackenzie Saathoff, Secretary

Russ Trauernicht, Treasurer

Rick Vollman, Board Member

Lauren Weyers, Board Member

Board Goals

Goal II: Communication Leadership

Objective: Strengthen school-community relations by effectively promoting the district's story, fostering engaged communication, and building strong partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.

Strategy I: Enhance community engagement by implementing clear, consistent, and communication strategies that highlight the district's achievements, priorities, mission, and vision.

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Admin & Committee Reports

Superintendent's Report: The superintendent's report included several maintenance updates, including the ordering of a replacement transformer for the high school hallway heat pump, Paul Davis performing a moisture mitigation in the high school, gym cleaning, and kitchen refrigerator repairs. These efforts are part of the district's ongoing work to maintain safe, functional, and well-maintained facilities for students and staff.

The report also included updates on grant opportunities. The district is pursuing a \$100,000 School Kitchen Modernization grant through the Rural Health Transformation Program, along with the Rural Communities Development Grant for potential facility upgrades. These opportunities could provide additional resources to support district needs and community initiatives.

A budget hearing will be held on Friday September 26, 2026 at 6:00pm for a minor amendment to the activities budget for the 25-26 school year.

Principal's Report: The principal's report began discussing that staff are working to strengthen school wide grading practices. The elementary school will continue implementing standards-based grading, while junior high and high school staff will focus on creating more consistent grading practices across classrooms. The high school will also transition its social-emotional and character education curriculum from CharacterStrong to Be Good People.

Updates were provided on schedule and calendar changes, including the 2:04 dismissal schedule and the professional development calendar. Staff have also completed annual required trainings and preparations for the first day of school.

Staffing updates included the addition of Kari Gray as a paraprofessional in the Pre-school and Robert Barney to the maintenance and custodial staff.

AD/Transportation Report: The AD/Transportation report included an update on the district's 80-day bus inspections. Issues requiring attention include a fire extinguisher and horn, along with an engine warning sensor that has recently come on and will need to be repaired. The activity bus also needs an updated fire extinguisher, a low-beam headlight, and several clearance lights.

Bus route assignments were also reviewed.

Fall activities are also underway, with volleyball and football practices beginning last Monday. This year, 17 girls are participating in volleyball and 21 boys are participating in football.

Action Items

Nutrition Fund: The Board approved a transfer of \$50,000 from the General Fund to the Nutrition Fund in preparation of the 26/27 fiscal year.

MOTION PASSED: 6-0

Depreciation Fund: The Board approved a \$50,000 transfer from the General Fund to the Depreciation Fund to support the district's facilities, equipment, and capital improvement needs. The transfer will help ensure resources are available for future replacement and major improvement projects.

MOTION PASSED: 6-0

Activities Fund: The Board approved a transfer of \$30,000 from the General Fund to the Activities Fund in preparation of the 26/27 fiscal year.

MOTION PASSED: 6-0

Discussion Items

Policy Review: The Board reviewed policies 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 3004.1, 3040, 4031, and 4053 as part of the district's regular policy review process. All policies were found to be in legal compliance, and no changes were recommended or made at this time.

Budget Hearing: The Board set the date and time for the annual budget hearing. The budget hearing for the 26/27 budget will be held on September 16 at 6:30 p.m.

Tax Request Hearing: The Board set the date and time for the annual tax request hearing. The tax request hearing for the 26/27 budget will be held on September 16 at 6:45 p.m.

Bond Discussion: The Board discussed placing bonded funds into certificates of deposit (CDs) to earn additional interest while the funds are not yet needed for bond project payments. The discussion focused on maximizing interest earnings while ensuring the funds remain available when needed for upcoming project expenses.

Next Meeting

Next Meeting: The next scheduled board meeting will be a special meeting on September 21, 2026 at the conclusion of committee meetings around 7:00pm in the Sterling High School Library.

