

STEWARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 220

STEWARD, ILLINOIS

Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting

January 21st, 2026 posted for participation.

Minutes taken by Matt Hayes.

The school board meeting of January 21st, 2026 was called to order by President Chele Wells.

On roll call at 6:00 pm, the following members were present:

Board members present: Chele Wells, Jen Kraemer, Jennie O’Rorke, Tom Brown, Bethany Drendel, Vicki Maertz, Matt Macklin, and Principal Michelle Esposito

Board members late:

Board members absent:

Visitors: Superintendent Steven Simpson

1. Approval of/Additions to the Agenda

On a motion by Bethany Drendel, seconded by Jen Kraemer, and with a unanimous voice vote, the agenda was accepted as presented.

2. Approval /Correction of Minutes from December 17th, 2025

On a motion by Bethany Drendel, seconded by Jen Kraemer, and with a unanimous voice vote, the minutes from December 17th, 2025 were accepted as presented.

3. Approval of Financial Reports and Bills

On a motion by Bethany Drendel, seconded by Jen Kraemer, and with a roll-call of all ayes, the bills and financial reports were accepted as presented.

4. Good News Communication and Report from Principal Esposito.
 - a. See file.
5. Board Communication for the Good of Steward District 220.
 - b. 6th-8th students are enjoying Mrs. Watterson as their new L.A./S.S. teacher.
6. Recognition and Comments from Employees and the Public
 - c. Memorandum of Understanding from the Lee County Sheriff was shared. (see file) It will be discussed at future meetings.

Old Business

7. Buildings and Grounds/ Building Usage –
 - a. Door #1, #2 & #6 had their center posts repaired.
 - b. Replacement of all the pull stations was bid out by Allegiant.

New Business

8. Steward School District Calendar 2026-2027

- a. Discussion was held about the High School possibly starting a week later due to Tilton School construction.
- b. The calendar will be tweaked and discussed at the next meeting.

9. Executive Session: To consider the appointment, employment, and compensation. Discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees or individual student matters.

On a motion by Vicky Maertz, seconded by Jen Kraemer, and with a unanimous voice vote, the Board approved to move into Executive Session at 6:40 pm.

On a motion by Vicky Maertz, seconded by Jen Kraemer, and with a unanimous voice vote, the Board approved to move out of Executive Session at 7:55 pm.

12. Action Resulting from Executive Session

On a motion by Bethany Drendel, seconded by Jen Kraemer, and with a roll-call of all ayes, the Board approved the hiring of Grace Watterson as a full-time substitute for 6th-8th Social Studies/ Language Arts.

On a motion by Bethany Drendel, seconded by Jen Kraemer, and with a roll-call of all ayes, the Board approved the hiring of Ashley Miller as a full-time substitute for 3rd grade.

13. The next meeting will be held on February 18th at 6:00 pm.

On a motion by Vicki Maertz, seconded by Jen Kraemer, and with a unanimous voice vote, the Board adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved by the Board of Education:

Vicki Maertz, Board Secretary
Board of Education
February 18th, 2026

Chele Wells, President
Board of Education