

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

January 11, 2021

Zoom

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Julie Pritchard called the Regular meeting of the Northfield Board of Education of Independent School District 659 to order at 7:17 p.m. Due to the health pandemic and the extension of Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-01 COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency, and in accordance with Minnesota Statute 13D.021, which permits boards to hold a meeting by telephone conference call or other electronic means, this meeting was conducted via video conference. The district did make accommodations for public comment which are outlined below.

Board member attendance was taken by roll call. Anita Aase, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Board of Education, called the name of each board member in alphabetical order by last name and the board member responded "present" when his/her name was called. Present: Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. Absent: None.

Also present at this video conference meeting were Superintendent Dr. Matt Hillmann, Anita Aase, Erin Bailey, Director of Community Education; Val Mertesdorf, Director of Finance; Cheryl Hall, Director of Special Services; Sal Bagley and Katelyn Chambers from Wold Architects and Engineers; Josh Cooper from Knutson Construction; Simon Tyler, Director of Prairie Creek Community School; Laura Stelter, Director of Arcadia Charter School; and Keith Johnson, Kelsey Fitschen and Ben Miller from Prairie Creek Community School. This meeting was live-streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted to the school district website.

Board Chair Pritchard outlined the procedures for this meeting:

- Board members were asked to mute their microphones when not speaking.
- At the start of each discussion Chair Pritchard said she would call on each board member in alphabetical order by last name for any questions or comments. If they didn't wish to speak, they would be welcome to pass.
- There would be one round of questioning for board members. If board members had a follow-up question or comment, they could consider using the Raise Hand feature in order to be recognized by the Chair.
- All votes on the Items for Individual Action would be conducted by roll call by Aase. Each board member was instructed to wait until their name was called before voting.

II. Agenda Approval/Table File

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Goerwitz, the Board approved the agenda by roll call. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

III. Public Comment

To accommodate the public comment portion of our meeting, members of the public were invited via the school district website to submit feedback to the Board via email by 5:00 p.m. on January 11, 2021. All submissions that followed the district policy regarding public comment were read by Chair Pritchard. There were no public comments.

IV. Announcements and Recognitions

The MSHSL AAA Winners were Senior Annie Frank and Senior Robert Swenson. The Academics, Arts, and Athletics Award, commonly known as the Triple 'A' Award, honors high school seniors throughout the state who have a 3.0 or higher-grade point average and who participate in League-sponsored athletic and fine arts activities.

V. Items for Discussion and Reports

A. Wold/Knutson Construction Overview

Sal Bagley and Katelyn Chambers from Wold Architects and Engineers, and Josh Cooper from Knutson Construction presented an overview of the five completed construction projects that were authorized by the public in November 2018. They reviewed the referendum projects' scope, planning processes, and timelines for the construction of the new Greenvale Park Elementary School, and the renovations at Bridgewater

Elementary School, Sibley Elementary School, the Northfield Community Education Center (the old Greenvale Park Elementary School), and the Longfellow Area Learning Center and District Office. We also publicly acknowledge and thank Director of Buildings and Grounds Jim Kulseth, and Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf for their continued day-to-day effective management of these projects.

B. Prairie Creek Community School & Arcadia Charter School Annual Reports

Simon Tyler, Director of Prairie Creek Community School, and Laura Stelter, Director of Arcadia Charter School, reported on the programs being provided in their two charter schools. Prairie Creek is in its eighteenth year of operation as a charter school under the sponsorship of Northfield Public Schools. Director Tyler also presented Prairie Creek's contract renewal application. The contract renewal application will be presented to the Board for approval at a later date. Arcadia is in its seventeenth year of operation. These reviews and written reports fulfill state requirements for annual reporting as well as our District's request that each charter school authorized by Northfield Public Schools present an annual report to the School Board.

C. Maintenance of Effort

Director of Special Services Cheryl Hall provided the Board with an overview of special education finance and the role of Maintenance of Effort. Due to the pandemic and the changes in our education programs during this peacetime emergency, there are financial implications we must address now to prevent future negative impacts on our financial budget. Due to student increases in Early Childhood Special Education and program changes at Northfield Community Education Center, Director Hall requested to temporarily increase the occupational therapy FTE from 1.0 to 2.0 for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year. This will be an item for individual action at the next board meeting.

Chair Pritchard asked for a motion to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Butler, the Board voted to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m. On a roll call vote, voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

C. Financial Update

Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf reported the deadline for spending our Coronavirus Relief Funds was December 31, 2020 and we are in the process of reconciling these funds with MDE. We anticipate receiving approximately \$1.3 million additional CARES funding due to the passage of the latest federal stimulus package. The Finance Department has begun working on 2021-22 budgets and plan to begin presentations to the Board in February. There is potential for some relief from the meal benefit application process and its impact on our compensatory estimate and our Title I funding. Currently working with the leadership team to identify any modest budget savings and we look for consensus to move the budget reduction process to next fiscal year.

D. Policy Committee Recommendations

Dr. Hillmann acknowledged the policy committee's recommendations on Policies 103, 417, 420 and 422. These policies will receive a first reading at the next board meeting.

E. COVID-19 Response and Operations Update

Superintendent Hillmann informed the Board vaccinations for district employees classified as 1.a. will occur next week and we are working on a plan for vaccine prioritization for 1.b. employees. Dr. Hillmann reviewed the return to campus plan for students which includes an in person learning model for PreK-5th grades and a hybrid learning model for students in grades 6-12. The Minnesota Safe Learning Plan, which sets recommended learning models based on the county infection rate per 10,000 residents, no longer applies to elementary schools. All staff and students must wear face masks, and staff may wear face shields in addition to the masks. The State of Minnesota is providing COVID-19 tests to districts and staff members will have the opportunity to take a free COVID-19 test every two weeks if desired.

The District completed its pilot COVID-19 testing just before the winter break. Overall 1,545 tests were administered. There were 33 positive tests with a 2.1% positivity rate. The District administered a 90-day

pulse survey of parents/guardians and employees. Every comment in the survey has been read and they are being analyzed for themes. The District will take two actions based on this feedback: we will return to hosting monthly COVID-19 webinars for employees and add a Q&A session. The District will emphasize the methods that employees have to provide input through their building level COVID-19 teams about overcoming the challenges we face.

VI. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Goerwitz, the Board approved the consent agenda by roll call. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

A. Minutes

- Minutes of the Special Closed School Board meeting held on December 14, 2020
- Minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on December 14, 2020

B. Gift Agreements

- \$1,117.82 from Dean & Lynne Lamp to Northfield High School band program
- \$1,000.00 from Kevin & Nanette Rodgers to Northfield High School
- \$1,000.00 from Kevin & Nanette Rodgers to Bridgewater Elementary for STEAM materials

C. Personnel

a) Appointments

1. Jordan Harrell, Community Services Basketball Official, beginning 1/4/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$22/game.
2. Beau Hayes, Assistant Wrestling Coach at the High School, for 2 hours/day 5 days a week, beginning 1/04/2021; Level E, Step 5.
3. Zoe Ingersoll, Assistant Gymnastics Coach, for 2 hours/day for 5 days/week at the High School, beginning 1/4/2021; Level E, Step 1.
4. David Miller, Jazz Band Director at the High School, for 2 hours/day 2 days/week, beginning 1/18/2021; Level L, Step 5.
5. Joey Silknitter, Community School Club Leader, for up to 2 hours/day for up to 4 days/week at Greenvale Park Elementary, beginning 1/11/2021; \$22.27/hour.
6. John Watkins, Community Services Fall, Winter, & Spring Recreation Site Supervisor, for up to 20 days beginning 1/4/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$14.14/hour.

b) Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment

1. Lynn Bauman, Assistant Gymnastics Coach, change to Assistant Gymnastics Coach, 50% of hourly position.
2. Danielle Crase, SpEd Teacher-EBD at the High School add ACT Accommodations Coordinator at the High School for up to 20 hours/school year.
3. Doug Davis, Physical Education Teacher at the High School and Head Boys Swim Team Coach, add .5 Assistant Boys Dive Coach; .50 FTE Level E, Step 6.
4. John Sand, 1.0 Physical Education teacher +overload for 2nd semester at the High School, change to 1.0 Physical Education teacher no overload for 2nd semester at the High School.
5. Leah Sand, Physical Education and Health teacher at the High School, add overload in lieu of supervision for 2nd semester 1.0 Physical Education and .2 Health.
6. John Watkins, Community Services Fall, Winter, & Spring Recreation Site Supervisor, add Community Services Basketball Official, beginning 1/4/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$22/game.
7. Travis Wiebe, Science teacher at the High School, add Head Olympic Weightlifting Team Coach, for 2 hours/day for 5 days/week; Level F, Step 1.
8. Brent Yule, Physical Education Teacher at Greenvale Park Elementary, add Assistant Wrestling Coach at the High School, for 2 hours/day for 5 days/week, beginning 1/04/2021; Level E, Step 2.
9. Randy Zick, Basketball Official, add Basketball Official for Community Education, \$22/game.
10. Jordan Harrell, Basketball Official with Community Education, add Program Supervisor at Community Education, effective 2/6/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$12.89/hour.
11. Bridgette Tisdale, teacher at Greenvale Park Elementary, add Targeted Services PLUS Teacher, effective 2/8/2021 through 6/10/2021; \$27.73/hour.

c) Leave of Absence

1. Katie Dahmeh, Educational Assistant EA/PCA at NCEC, unpaid leave of absence from 10/15/2020 through 6/10/2021.

2. Sarah Swan McDonald, Teacher at the High School, leave of absence under the Family/Medical Leave Act, effective January 4, 2021 on an intermittent basis for up to 60 work days.
 3. Gina Swenson, 1st grade Teacher at Sibley Elementary, leave of absence under the Family/Medical leave Act, effective 1/14/2021 through 2/5/2021.
 4. Alicia Veltri, Special Education Teacher at Greenvale Park Elementary, leave of absence under the Family/Medical Leave Act effective on or about May 8, 2021 through the end of the 2020-2021 school year.
 5. Lori Gunderson, CNA at the High School, unpaid leave of absence effective 1/11/2021 through 2/5/2021.
- d) Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
1. Tabatha Lagro, Educational Assistant at Sibley Elementary, resignation effective December 15, 2020.
 2. Robyn Spillman, Educational Assistant at Greenvale Elementary, resignation effective January 1, 2021.

VII. Superintendent's Report

VIII. Items for Information

- A. Enrollment Report. Superintendent Hillmann reviewed the January enrollment report.
- B. Rock N' Roll Revival Update. Rock N' Roll Revival is tentatively scheduled toward the end of the school year. It will be held outdoors and involve a reduced cast.

IX. Future Meetings

- A. Monday, January 25, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting
- B. Monday, February 8, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting
- C. Monday, February 22, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Gonzalez-George, the Board approved adjournment by roll call at 10:32 p.m. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

Noel Stratmoen
School Board Clerk