

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS **School Board Minutes**

January 12, 2026
District Office Board Room

1. Call to Order

The organizational meeting of the Northfield School Board was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Acting Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George for the purpose of organizing the board for the 2026 calendar year. Present: Butler, Epstein, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Miller, Nelson and Quinnell. Absent: None. This meeting was open to the public, live-streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted on the school district website. *Note: There was an equipment malfunction that prevented the meeting from being video-streamed and recorded. The audio of the meeting is available on the district's website. The district apologizes for this inconvenience.*

2. Land Acknowledgement Statement

District Youth Council member Mae Bowers read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

3. Oath of Office

Minnesota Supreme Court Associate Justice Gordon Moore administered the ceremonial oath of office. All school board members participated.

4. Agenda Approval

On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Nelson, the board unanimously approved the agenda.

5. Items for Individual Action

a. Election of Officers.

i. Election of board chair.

Goerwitz moved that Claudia Gonzalez-George be nominated as board chair. There were no further nominations. Claudia Gonzalez-George was the only candidate nominated for the office of chair, and was hereby declared elected by acclamation. Motion carried unanimously. Acting Chair Gonzalez-George directed the acting clerk to so record in the minutes. Board Chair Gonzalez-George then chaired the remainder of the organizational board meeting.

ii. Election of vice-chair.

Epstein moved that Corey Butler be nominated as vice-chair. There were no further nominations. Corey Butler was the only candidate nominated for the office of vice-chair, and was hereby declared elected by acclamation and Chair Gonzalez-George directed the acting clerk to so record in the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

iii. Election of clerk.

Butler moved that Amy Goerwitz be nominated as clerk. Gonzalez-George moved that Maggie Epstein be nominated as clerk. Goerwitz rescinded her nomination. There were no further nominations. Maggie Epstein was the only candidate nominated for the office of clerk, and was hereby declared elected by acclamation and Chair Gonzalez-George directed the acting clerk to so record in the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

iv. Election of treasurer.

Goerwitz moved that she be nominated as treasurer. There were no further nominations. Amy Goerwitz was the only candidate nominated for the office of treasurer, and was hereby declared elected by acclamation and Chair Gonzalez-George directed the clerk to so record in the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Set Dates, Times and Location for Regular Board Meetings. On a motion by Epstein, seconded by Quinnell, the board unanimously approved the schedule for school board meetings January 2026 - January 2027. Regular meetings of the Northfield School Board will begin at 6:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Mondays in January, February, April, May, August, September, October and November, except where indicated, and will be held in the District Office Boardroom. One meeting will be held the second Monday of the month in March, June, July and December. In the event that a board

meeting needs to be postponed due to inclement weather, the meeting will be rescheduled for the following day at the same time in the same location.

- c. School Board Member Stipends. On a motion by Butler, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved to maintain the stipends for board members at \$4,000 annually, and \$5,000 annually for the board chair.

6. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Nelson, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved the consent agenda.

- a. Designate the Official District Newspaper. The official newspaper of the Northfield School Board will be the *Northfield News*.
- b. Designate Legal Counsel. The school board designates Squires, Waldspurger & Mace P.A. as the official legal counsel for Northfield Public Schools and Dorsey & Whitney, LLP as the official bond attorneys for Northfield Public Schools. Persons authorized to contact legal counsel are the Superintendent, the Director of Human Resources, the Director of Finance, the Director of Special Services, and other district-level administrators only after receiving superintendent approval.
- c. Authorization of Use of Facsimile Signatures. The school board authorizes that facsimile signatures of board officers be utilized in signing school district checks and documents.
- d. Mileage Reimbursement Rate. The mileage reimbursement rate for the use of private automobiles on school district business will be 72.5 cents per mile effective January 1, 2026. This is the new mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service.

7. Items for Information

- a. Policy 203 Operation of the School Board of Education - Bylaws. Board members are expected to familiarize themselves with Policy 203 Operation of the School Board of Education - Bylaws.
- b. Policy 209 Code of Ethics. Board members are expected to familiarize themselves with Policy 209 Code of Ethics. The purpose of this policy is to assist board members in understanding the role of individual board members and the contribution that each must make to develop an effective and responsible school board.
- c. Policy 206 Public Participation in School Board Meetings. A copy of Policy 206 Public Participation in School Board Meetings is attached for board members to review. The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures to assure open and orderly public discussion and protect the due process and privacy rights of individuals under the law.
- d. Resolution to Empower the School Board to Combine the Duties of the Offices of Clerk and Treasurer of the School Board in One Person in the Finance Office of the School District. The board unanimously approved this resolution by roll call on Jan. 14, 2019 which empowers Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf to conduct the duties of clerk and treasurer for the purposes of expediting the business of the district. This resolution is a one-time requirement and remains in effect until the board acts to appoint someone else in the finance office to fulfill this role.
- e. Board Committee Memberships. A brief description of each board committee or organization for calendar year 2026 is attached. Board member committee appointments and representation on various organizations and school liaisons will be an action item at the Jan. 26 regular board meeting.
- f. Remote Board Meeting Participation. Minnesota Statute 13D.02 provides guidance on remote board meeting participation. It states that all board members, regardless of location, must be able to hear and see each other, as well as hear all discussions occurring at any location. At least one board member must be physically present at the regular meeting location, all votes must be conducted by roll call, and minutes must include the names of board members appearing by interactive technology

and the reasons for their remote appearance. Remote board meeting participation is referenced in Policy 203.

- g. Board Workshops. The school board will hold workshops and training sessions on Thursday, Jan. 29, Thursday, April 2 and Monday, July 27 at 5:00 p.m.
- 8. Adjournment
On a motion by Epstein, seconded by Butler, the board adjourned the organizational meeting at 6:31 p.m.



Maggie Epstein
School Board Clerk