

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

January 13, 2025

Northfield District Office Boardroom

1. Call to Order

The organizational meeting of the Northfield School Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Acting Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George for the purpose of organizing the board for the 2025 calendar year. Present: Butler, Epstein, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Miller, Nelson and Quinnell. Absent: None.

2. 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

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.

Miller 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. There were no further nominations. Amy Goerwitz 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.

Gonzalez-George moved that Ben Miller be nominated as treasurer. There were no further nominations. Ben Miller 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 Butler, seconded by Nelson, the board unanimously approved the schedule for school board meetings January 2025 - January 2026. 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 Miller, seconded by Epstein, the board unanimously approved to maintain the stipends for board members at \$4,000 annually, \$330 per month, and \$5,000 annually, \$416 per month for the board chair.

6. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Butler, 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 designated 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 authorized that facsimile signatures of board officers be utilized in signing school district checks and documents.
- d. Mileage Reimbursement Rate. The board approved the mileage reimbursement rate for the use of private automobiles on school district business at 70 cents per mile effective January 1, 2025. This mileage rate was established by the Internal Revenue Service.

7. Items for Information

- a. Policy 203 Operation of the School Board of Education - Bylaws. Chair Gonzalez-George asked the board to review Policy 203 Operation of the School Board of Education - Bylaws.
- b. Policy 209 Code of Ethics. Chair Gonzalez-George asked board members 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 was 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 2025 was attached. Board member committee appointments and representation on various organizations and school liaisons will be an action item at the Jan. 27 regular board meeting.
- f. Remote Board Meeting Participation. Chair Gonzalez-George reviewed the board's policy regarding remote board meeting participation. Minnesota Statute 13D.02 provides guidance on remote board meeting participation. It states that a board member must give notice if they will be participating in a board meeting remotely and what their location will be. That notice must be given three days in advance, and the board member's location must be posted. The remote board member's location must be open and accessible to the public. Remote board meeting participation is referenced in Policy 203.

g. Board Workshops. The school board will hold workshops on Saturday, February 1 at 9:00 a.m., Monday, June 9 following the regular board meeting and Monday, November 10 following the regular board meeting.

8. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Butler, the board adjourned the organizational meeting at 6:13 p.m.



Amy Goerwitz
School Board Clerk