

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

January 24, 2022

District Office Boardroom

1. Call to Order

Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George called the Regular meeting of the Northfield Board of Education of Independent School District No. 659 to order at 6:00 p.m. Present: Baraniak, Butler, Gonzalez-George, Goerwitz, Pritchard and Stratmoen. Quinnell arrived at 6:03 p.m. Absent: None. This meeting was open to the public, live-streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted to the school district website.

2. Agenda Approval/Table File

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

3. Public Comment

There was one public comment.

4. Announcements and Recognitions

- January is Paraprofessional Month and Governor Walz has proclaimed January 24-30, 2022 as Paraprofessional Recognition Week in the State of Minnesota. Northfield Public Schools recognizes all educational assistants and their contributions to support student learning and successful outcomes, through small group and one-on-one instruction, instructional assistance, support, and assessment.
- The National Association of Elementary School Principals featured Bridgewater Elementary Principal Nancy Antoine in this month's *Principal* magazine.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

- a. Results of the 2022A General Obligation Facilities Maintenance Bond Sale Shelby McQuay with Ehlers, Inc. reviewed the results of the 2022A general obligation facilities maintenance bond sale and the January 24, 2022 Sale Day Report. It is notable that the district received a AA+ bond rating and is moving forward with a budget reprioritization process. The request to the board to approve the resolution awarding the sale of the bonds is on tonight's meeting agenda as an item for individual action.
- b. Demographic Study Report. Hazel Reinhardt presented the results of the district's demographic study and enrollment projections. The projection environment includes lower birth rates, less mobility, an aging population, slowing immigration, and Minnesota's population is in a pattern of net out migration. The decline in resident birth rates has resulted in a decline in the kindergarten pool. Years 2021-22 to 2026-27, and 2021-22 to 2031-32 project a decline in district enrollment of approximately 400 students. Ms. Reinhardt analyzed the effect of additional single-family housing and apartment units on enrollment, although this information is not readily available.
- c. Summary of Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George shared her summary of the superintendent's mid-year performance evaluation July 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021. Board members gave Dr. Hillmann a very strong performance rating across all key areas. His overall average score was 4.92 on a 5-point scale across 48 job responsibilities organized around eight major topics and four goals. Board members cited Dr. Hillmann's exceptional work in three key areas: facilitation of the five (5) year strategic plan, his commitment to the district's mission and vision, and his relationship with the community.
- d. Semi-Annual Fundraising Report. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf reviewed the fundraising report as required by Policy 713 Student Activity Accounting.

- e. Revised 2022-23 School Year Calendar. Superintendent Hillmann presented a revision to the 2022-23 school year calendar. The updates to the calendar are the result of recently completed negotiations with the Northfield Education Association. This will be an item for individual action at the next board meeting.
- f. Policy Recommendations. Dr. Hillmann presented updates to policies 503, 515, 524.2, and 534. These policies have been revised and reflect federal and state statutory changes, recent court decisions, and align with the model policies provided by MSBA.
- g. Superintendent Operations and COVID-19 Update. The district will begin to include the seven (7)-day COVID-19 case rate on the COVID dashboard. The influenza-like illness (ILI) rates have been higher than five percent daily at several buildings over the last two week. However, public health views the ILI rate differently within the context of the Omicron variant. Staffing has been a challenge and we use a cascading approach to cover staffing to maintain our goal of in-person learning. We have completed over 1,200 Cue tests in the testing clinic; we have approximately 10,000 rapid antigen tests for our test to stay program on hand; we have KN95 masks available to all staff and students; and we have updated our COVID protocols and moved to 5 day quarantine.

Standard & Poor's formally evaluated the district's finances as part of the standard bond sales process. The district maintained its superior AA+ bond rating. This external evaluation is another metric that demonstrates the district's excellent financial management. The board's legislative action committee has organized a "School Finance 101" webinar for Jan. 25 at 6:30 p.m.

6. Committee Reports

Board member Julie Pritchard shared the Legislative Action Committee report.

7. Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes

- Minutes of the Organizational School Board meeting held on January 10, 2022
- Minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on January 10, 2022

b. Gift Agreements

- \$4,506.16 from Cannon Strength, LLC for the JV softball scoreboard
- Anonymous donor: \$50,000.00 unassigned for Northfield High School and \$50,000.00 specifically for baseball improvements at Northfield High School, including but not limited to new or updated equipment and field maintenance.

c. Personnel Items

i. Appointments

1. Alison Flannery, General Ed EA for 1.25 hours/day for 4 days/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 1/18/2022-6/9/2022; Step 1-\$15.57/hr.
2. Mason Vatter, Event Worker at the Middle School, beginning 1/18/2022; Student \$10.33/hr.
3. Nina Vo, Community School Club Leader for up to 3 hours/day for 2 days/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 2/8/2022-6/3/2022; \$23.01/hr.
4. Karen Anderson, Lifeguard with Community Education Recreation, beginning 1/24/2022-5/31/2022; \$10.64/hr.
5. Robyn Dietz, Gen Ed EA for 1.25 hours/day for 4 days/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 1/31/2022-6/9/2022; Step 1-\$15.57/hr.
6. Michelle Murphy, CNA I for 3.75 hours/day at the High School, beginning 2/21/2022; \$19.28/hr.
7. Ashley Opatrny, Special Ed Teacher-Resource Room with .6 FTE Portage/.4 FTE GVP, beginning on or about 2/15/2022-6/9/2022; BA, Step 1-pending obtaining license from PELSB.
8. Brian Porter, Assistant Boys Swim/Dive Coach at the High School, beginning 1/24/2022; Level 2, Step 10

9. Ariana Vermilyea, Program Supervisor with Community Education Recreation, beginning 1/24/2022-5/31/2022; \$10.89/hr.

ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment

1. Paul Bernhard, Teacher at Bridgewater, add Ski & Snowboard Club Chaperone with Community Education Recreation, effective 1/17/2022-5/31/2022; \$56.25/night stipend
2. Katie Casson, Teacher at the High School, add Assistant Knowledge Bowl Coach at the High School, effective 2/1/2022.
3. Ellen Mucha, Assistant Knowledge Bowl Coach at the High School, change to Head Knowledge Bowl Coach at the High School, effective 2/1/2022.
4. Karrie Van Zuilen, Special Ed EA Bus for 2.5 hours/week at the NCEC, change to Special Ed EA Bus for 1 hour/week at the NCEC, effective 1/12/2022-6/10/2022.
5. Winston Vermilyea, Special Ed EA at Spring Creek, add Program Supervisor with Community Education Recreation, effective 1/12/2022-5/31/2022; \$14.14/hr.
6. Adriana Bermudez, ECFE EA Sib Care for 15.5 hours/week at the NCEC, change to ECFE EA Sib Care for 16 hours/week at the NCEC, effective 1/3/2022.
7. Craig Johnson, Teacher at the High School, add BASS Fishing Coordinator with Community Education Recreation, effective 2/7/2022-8/31/2022; \$25/participant
8. Julene Johnson, Gen Ed EA at Bridgewater, add Community School Evening Site Assistant at Greenvale Park, effective 1/25/2022-6/3/2022. Step 4-\$15.48/hr.

iii. Leave of Absence

1. Michael Humann, Custodian Engineer w/License at the DO/ALC, Family/Medical Leave of Absence, effective 1/20/2022-2/3/2022.
2. Mark Langevin, Teacher at the Middle School, Family/Medical Leave of Absence, effective 2/3/2022-2/17/2022.
3. Danielle Olson, School Social Worker at NCEC, medical leave of absence beginning 2/28/2022-4/1/2022.
4. Steve Rinderknecht, custodian at Bridgewater Elementary, FMLA leave date changed to 1/26/2022-4/15/2022.
5. Kimbra Dimick, Teacher at Greenvale Park, Unpaid Leave of Absence, beginning 1/31/2022-3/13/2022.

iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations

1. Natalie Amy, Golf Coach at the Middle School, resignation effective 1/5/2022.
2. Katiana Trout, CNA at the Middle School, termination effective 1/11/2022.
3. Lisa Williams, Special Ed EA Bus with the district, resignation from bus only effective 1/18/2022.

8. Items for Individual Action

- a. Resolution Relating to \$3,120,000 General Obligation Facilities Maintenance Bonds, Series 2022A; Authorizing Issuance, Awarding Sale, Prescribing the Form and Details and Providing for the Payment Thereof. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Pritchard, the board approved the Resolution Relating to \$3,120,000 General Obligation Facilities Maintenance Bonds, Series 2022A; Authorizing Issuance, Awarding Sale, Prescribing the Form and Details and Providing for the Payment Thereof. At the November 22, 2021 meeting, the board determined to sell and issue approximately \$3,120,000 principal amount of general obligation facilities maintenance bonds. The proposals for the bond sale were opened Monday, January 24, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. On a roll call vote, voting 'yes' was Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.
- b. Policy 460. On a motion by Pritchard, seconded by Butler, the board adopted Policy 460 Remote Work.
- c. COVID-19 Safety Protocols Exit Criteria 2021-22. On a motion by Baraniak, seconded by Pritchard, the board approved the COVID-19 safety protocols exit criteria for 2021-22. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard and Stratmoen. Voting 'no' was Quinnell.
- d. Resolution Requiring Administration to Make Recommendations Regarding Programming and Staffing for Next Year. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Baraniak, the board authorized the administration to make recommendations for additions and reductions in programs and for adding or discontinuing positions. On a roll call vote, voting 'yes' was Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell, and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

- e. Retirement by Agreement. On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Baraniak, the board approved the retirement by agreement with Jacalyn Harding.

9. Items for Information

- a. Committee Assignments. Board Chair Gonzalez-George shared school board members' committee assignments for the 2022 calendar year.

10. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, February 14, 2022, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, February 28, 2022, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- c. Monday, March 14, 2022, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Goerwitz, the board adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Noel Stratmoen
School Board Clerk