

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

January 25, 2021

Board Room, Longfellow Building

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 7:00 p.m. Present: Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. In accordance with Governor Walz's Stay Safe Plan, this meeting was set up in accordance with the plan's social distancing guidelines. In addition, all those present wore face coverings the duration of the meeting. Present at this meeting was Dr. Matt Hillmann, Superintendent and Anita Aase, Executive Administrative Assistant. Present via video conference was Erin Bailey, Director of Community Education; Val Mertesdorf, Director of Finance; and Kim Briske, Director of Technology Services. Observing the meeting in-person was Sam Wilmes, a reporter with the Northfield News. This meeting was live-streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted to the school district website.

II. Agenda Approval/Table File

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

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 25, 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

- Northfield High School Junior Clara Falcon-Geist spoke at Governor Walz's press conference on January 25, 2021. At this press conference the Governor outlined the "Due North" Education Plan and Clara spoke from a student perspective about the plan. Thank you Clara for being a great representative for our community.
- Congratulations to Northfield High School Senior Rahmah Abdulai. Rahmah received the Human Rights Award at the Northfield Human Rights Commission's MLK Celebration on January 18, 2021.
- Thank you to Bridgewater Elementary Principal Nancy Antoine. Ms. Antoine was the keynote speaker at the Northfield Human Rights Commission's MLK Celebration on January 18, 2021.

V. Items for Discussion and Reports

A. Technology Services Update

Director of Technology Services Kim Briske informed the Board we have hired and retained a superb group of technicians and we currently provide 1:1 iPads and Logitech Crayons to all of our K-12 students. COVID-19 has increased our reliance on technology in new ways that will provide benefit when we are back to in-person learning in all our schools. Technology Services will focus on aligning professional development for district and building leaders, teachers, support staff, and substitute teachers.

B. Summary of Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation

Chair Pritchard shared her summary of the Superintendent's mid-year performance evaluation. Board members gave Dr. Hillmann a very strong performance rating, 4.91 on a 5-point scale, across 44 key job responsibilities around eight topics. Highlighted were Dr. Hillmann's adaptive leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic, his financial stewardship, and his commitment to the District's equity work.

C. Financial Update

Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf informed the Board that 90% of the ESSER funding estimate from the Minnesota Department of Education is \$1,153,417. We have not yet been informed about the remaining 10% GEERS funding we anticipate receiving. We will have a process in place to distribute these funds after we receive the guidelines on how these funds can be used.

D. Policy Committee Recommendations

Dr. Hillmann presented the policy committee's recommendations on Policies 103, 417, 420 and 422. This will be included as an item for individual action at the next Board meeting.

E. COVID-19 Response and Operations Update

Superintendent Hillmann informed the Board on District anti-racism work including the events and celebrations the District participated in on January 18, 2021, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. PreK-2 students returned to campus, in person on January 19, and 3-5 grade students will return on February 1. Secondary students are scheduled to return to the hybrid learning model on February 2. We had 124 staff participate in the State sponsored semi-monthly voluntary COVID saliva testing available to all employees. We are working through our vaccination prioritization matrix and have staff receiving vaccines in partnership with Northfield Hospital+Clinics and through the pilot program offered through the State of Minnesota.

There were approximately 680 students enrolled in the Portage learning option during the first semester and we have 115 Portage students returning to on-campus programming when their corresponding grade levels return to in person or hybrid learning models. We continue to work on the process of renaming the Longfellow building and Sibley Elementary, and the high school mascot refresh.

F. Legislative Update & Legislative Action Committee Concept

Superintendent Hillmann provided a legislative update which included the "Due North" Educational Plan Governor Walz announced on January 25, 2021, and he shared the 2021 legislative platforms from the Minnesota School Board Association and Schools for Equity in Education. Chair Pritchard proposed the formation of a Legislative Action School Board Committee (LAC). This dedicated group of board members would commit to engage in advocacy with state lawmakers for legislation that supports quality P-12 public education. The Board will approve the formation of LAC as an item for individual action at the next Board meeting.

VI. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

VII. 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 11, 2021
- Minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on January 11, 2021

B. Financial Report

Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requested that the Board approve paid bills totaling \$2,545,363.06, payroll checks totaling \$2,792,223.40, a wire transfer totaling \$2,756,007.83 from MN Trust Bldg Bond to MSDLAF Liquid, a wire transfer totaling \$300,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$400,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for August 2020. At the end of August 2020 total cash and investments amounted to \$44,499,994.08.

C. Personnel

a) Appointments

1. Theresa Bauman, Long Term Substitute Grade 1 Teacher at Sibley Elementary, effective 1/14/2021 through 1/29/2021; MA, Step 10.
2. Dylan Dietz, 9th Grade Basketball Referee, as needed for games, effective 1/14/2021; \$14/hour.
3. Jeff Eckhoff, Event worker, as needed for games, effective 1/21/2021; \$18/hour
4. Gabbi Grant, Community Services Recreation Position, Tuesdays, 3:00-5:00pm, for up to 8-10 days, effective 2/2/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$10.08/hour.

5. Samantha Ims, Community Services Recreation Position, Saturdays for 3 hours, effective 2/6/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$10.25/hour.
 6. Mohamed Nur, Technology Specialist, effective 1/25/2021; \$61,082+step 2 - both prorated for the 2020/2021 school year
 7. Chad Prigge, Long Term Substitute Grade 8 English Teacher, effective 1/19/2021 through 3/19/2021; BA+30, step 10.
 8. Emma Rasmussen, Community Services Recreation Position, Saturdays for 3 hours, effective 2/6/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$10.89/hour.
 9. Adrienne Whitson, Community Services Recreation Position, Saturdays for 3 hours, effective 2/6/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$10.25/hour.
 10. Kayla Christmas, SpEd Educational Assistant-PCA at Greenvale Park Elementary, 6.75 hours/day, effective 2/2/2021 through 6/10/2021; 16.75/hour.
 11. Colleen Gottsch, SpEd Educational Assistant-PCA at Northfield High School, 6.75 hours/day on Thursdays and Fridays, effective 2/5/2021 through 6/10/2021; 17.31/hour.
 12. Ella Jerdee, Community Services Recreation Staff for 3 hours on Saturdays, effective 2/6/2021 through 5/31/2021; \$10.08/hour.
 13. Coral Ramos, Community School Evening Site Assistant at Greenvale Park Elementary, up to 3 hours/2days/week, effective 2/2/2021 through 6/10/2021; Step 3, \$14.37/hour.
 14. Coral Ramos, Community School Club Leader at Greenvale Park Elementary, up to 3 hours/2days/week, effective 2/2/2021 through 6/10/2021; \$22.27/hour.
 15. Winston Vermilyea, .5 Boys Swim and Dive Coach for 2 hours/3 days/week, effective 1/25/2021; Level E, Step 1- 50% of stipend.
- b) Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment
1. Updated: Theresa Bauman, Long Term Substitute Grade 1 Teacher at Sibley Elementary effective 1/14/2021 through 2/5/2021.
 2. Russel Boyington, EA Lunch Supervisor at Greenvale Park Elementary, 11:00 am-1:15 pm, change to EA Lunch Supervisor 11:00 am-1:30 pm effective 1/19/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 3. Brea Cruce, SpEd Educational Assistant-PCA at Northfield Community Education Center for 3.50 hours/day, increase to 4.9 hours/day, effective 1/13/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 4. Brenda Hand, EL Teacher at Bridgewater Elementary, add EL Mentor Teacher effective 1/14/2021 through 6/10/2021; \$750 stipend.
 5. Lesly Martinez Reyes, SpEd Education Assistant-PCA at Bridgewater Elementary, 5.98 hours/week and General Education EA for .50 hrs/day (6.48 hrs/day total), change to SpEd Education Assistant-PCA at Greenvale Park Elementary, 6.75 hours/week and General Education EA for .50 hrs/day (7.25 hrs/day total), effective 1/19/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 6. Joanna McLees, SpEd Education Assistant-PCA at Northfield Community Education Center for 3.6 hours/day, increase to 6.3 hours/day, effective 1/19/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 7. Mary Momberg, Special Education Teacher at Northfield Middle School, add Event Worker - Boys Swim Meets, effective 1/18/2021, \$18/hour
 8. Ashly Polzin, Teacher at Bridgewater Elementary, add Plus Teacher for up to 1.5 hours per day, Monday through Thursday, effective 2/1/2021 through 5/1/2021; \$27.11/hour.
 9. Jenni Roney, Enrichment Coordinator at Northfield Community Education Center, 40 hours/week, change to 20 hours/week, effective 2/1/2021.
 10. Jamin Sawyer, Physical Therapist at Northfield Community Education Center, add Event Worker-Boys Swim Meets, effective 1/18/2021; \$18/hour.
 11. Grace Schultz, Hand in Hand General Education Teacher for 40 hours/week, change to 21 hours/week Hand in Hand Preschool Teacher, 4 hours/week Hand in Hand Portage Preschool Teacher, 5 hours/week IEP meetings, 10 hours/week Early Ventures Teacher, effective 1/25/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 12. Bernard Selwan, Math Teacher at Northfield High School, add Middle School Math League Coach, for 2.5 hours/week, effective 2/1/2021; Level J/Step 1.
 13. Scott Stanina, English Teacher at Northfield High School, add overload in lieu of supervision for 2nd semester.
 14. Brynne Stellner, English Teacher at Northfield High School, add overload in lieu of supervision for 2nd semester.
 15. Jeff Wright, Head Boys LaCrosse Coach, add Event Worker-Hockey games, effective 1/21/2021; \$18/hour.
 16. Tyler Balow, Teacher at Northfield High School, add .2 Winter Weight Room Coach, effective 1/25/2021: Level J, Step 1.
 17. Steve Beaulieu, Portage Learning Coach for District, add Portage overload in lieu of prep, effective 2/1/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 18. Matt Crase, LTS Special Education Teacher, extended through 6/10/2021.

19. Tom Dickerson, Teacher at Northfield High School, add .4 Winter Weight Room Coach, effective 1/25/2021: Level J, Step 1.
 20. Carrie Duba, Instructional Coach for District, add Portage Lead overload for 86 days in lieu of prep, effective 2/1/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 21. Sara Mikkelson, Portage Learning Coach, add Portage overload in lieu of prep, effective 2/1/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 22. Amy Moeller, Portage Learning Coach/High School English Teacher, change to 1.0 FTE Portage Coach with Portage overload in lieu of prep, effective 2/1/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 23. Ellen Mucha, Portage Learning Coach, add Portage overload in lieu of prep, effective 2/1/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 24. Leah Sand, Physical Education and Health Teacher plus overload at Northfield High School, change to in lieu of prep rather than supervision effective 2/1/2021 through 6/10/2021.
 25. Mackenzie Schewe, Early Ventures Assistant Teacher at Northfield Community Education Center, for 10 hours/week, change to on-call substitute Assistant Teacher for Early Ventures and Kid Ventures, effective 1/25/2021.
 26. Bubba Sullivan, Teacher at Northfield High School, add .2 Winter Weight Room Coach, effective 1/25/2021: Level J, Step 1.
 27. Amanda Tracy, Portage Learning Coach, add Portage overload in lieu of prep, effective 2/1/2021 through 6/10/2021.
- c) Leave of Absence
1. Susan Bolton, Teacher at Bridgewater Elementary, Leave of Absence under Family/Medical Leave, effective 1/19/2021 through 2/17/2021.
 2. Shawna Molloy, Special Education Teacher at the High School, extending leave of absence through the end of the 2020-21 school year.
 3. Christopher O'Neill, Teacher at the Middle School, Leave of Absence under Family/Medical Leave, effective 2/8/2021 through 3/1/2021.
 4. Tiffany Ryan, Teacher at Bridgewater Elementary, Leave of Absence under Family/Medical Leave, effective 2/1/2021 through 2/15/2021.
 5. Update: Lori Gunderson, Child Nutrition Associate at Northfield High School, extend medical Leave of Absence through 4/2/2021.
- d) Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
1. Colleen Almen, Child Nutrition Associate II, resignation effective 1/19/2021.
 2. Kim Cecil, Administrative Assistant at Sibley Elementary, retirement effective 6/16/2021.
 3. Mark Thornton, Teacher and Football Coach at Northfield High School, resignation as Football Coach effective 1/22/2021.
 4. Julie Wolner, Teacher at Northfield High School, retirement effective 6/11/2021.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

A. Items for Individual Action

1. Request to Hire Additional Special Education Staff at Northfield Community Education Center for Early Childhood Special Education. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Butler, the Board approved the request to hire additional special education staff at Northfield Community Education Center for Early Childhood Special Education to temporarily increase the occupational therapy FTE from 1.0 to 2.0 for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year. The total projected cost is \$42,575, salary \$29,620 and benefits \$12,955, with approximately 55% of the salary reimbursed through special education revenue for a net cost of \$26,284.
2. Pay Equity Report. On a motion by Baraniak, seconded by Goerwitz, the Board approved the submission of the January 2021 Pay Equity Report.

IX. Items for Information

- A. Paraprofessional Recognition Week is January 25-29, 2021. Governor Walz proclaimed January 25-29, 2021 Paraprofessional Recognition Week. There are over 20,000 paraprofessionals in Minnesota working hard every day to make sure every child has the education they need to succeed in school and life. See MDE's paraprofessionals web page for more information, including ideas for ways to thank your paraprofessionals for their hard work.

X. Future Meetings

- A. Monday, February 8, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Board Room in the Longfellow Building
- B. Monday, February 22, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Board Room in the Longfellow Building

XI. Adjournment

On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Quinnell, the Board adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Noel Stratmoen
School Board Clerk