

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

January 26, 2026
District Office Board Room

1. Call to Order

School Board Vice Chair Corey Butler called the regular meeting of the Board of Education of Independent School District No. 659 to order at 6:00 p.m. Present: Butler, Epstein, Goerwitz, Miller, and Quinnell. Absent: Gonzalez-George and Nelson. Board member Miller participated remotely due to work-related travel. This meeting was open to the public, live-streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted on the school district website.

2. Agenda Approval/Table File

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Epstein, the board unanimously approved the agenda by roll call. Voting 'yes' were Epstein, Goerwitz, Miller, Quinnell, and Butler. No one voted 'no'.

3. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

4. Announcements and Recognitions

- The Gator/Raider Boys Swim and Dive team placed third at the Class A True Team State Meet on Saturday, Jan. 24. This was the team's fifth straight trip to the True Team State Meet.
- The Northfield High School Business Professionals of America (BPA) competed at the Region 2 Competition on Thursday, Jan. 8, with 16 students advancing to the state competition, which will be held March 5-7, 2026.
- Board Member Ben Miller acknowledged the challenging time experienced by the state of Minnesota. He reported that he had attended several community events over the weekend and commended the ongoing efforts of community members in supporting the district's students and staff.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

- a. Reimagine Northfield High School Update. Sal Bagley from Wold Architects and Engineers provided an update to the board on the progress of the Reimagine Northfield High School project.
- b. Summary of Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation. Board Vice Chair Corey Butler shared the summary of the superintendent's mid-year performance evaluation.
- c. Policy Committee Recommendations. Superintendent Hillmann presented the policy committee's recommended updates to policies 443, 505, 507, and 520.1. This will be an item for individual action at the Feb. 9, 2026 board meeting.

6. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Epstein, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved the consent agenda by roll call. Voting 'yes' were Epstein, Goerwitz, Miller, Quinnell, and Butler. No one voted 'no'.

- a. Minutes. Minutes of the organizational school board meeting held on Jan. 12, 2026 and the regular school board meeting held on Jan. 12, 2026.
- b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements were included in the board packet.
- c. Grant Application. Superintendent Matt Hillmann and Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requested school board approval for a grant to support the Northfield Teaching Fellows initiative for \$493,580 from the Minnesota Department of Education for the time period July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2031. This grant will continue supporting individuals of color, up to 12 students each school year, toward successful completion of a PELSB-approved teaching program. Northfield Public Schools serves as the lead for the project and relies on its ongoing partnership with Healthy Community Initiative (HCI).
- d. Overnight Field Trip Requests.

- i. Northfield High School Robotics Team Adviser Nicholas Connor requested board approval to take the high school robotics team to the Lake Superior Regional Competition March 5-7, 2026 in Duluth, MN.
 - ii. Northfield High School Robotics Team Adviser Nicholas Connor requested board approval to take the high school robotics team to the North Star Regional Competition April 2-4, 2026 in Minneapolis, MN.
- e. Personnel Items.
- i. Appointments
 - 1. Brynn Bahler, Instructor Assistant for Community Education/Recreation effective 2/7/2027-5/31/2026. Step 2, \$15.29/hr.
 - 2. Alberta Bravo Moreno, 1.0 FTE Custodian at the High School beginning 1/22/2026. Step 1, \$21.76/hr.
 - 3. Jana Hirsch, Rock 'n' Roll Revival - Assistant Costumer at the High School beginning 2/1/2026. \$1,000 stipend.
 - 4. Ann Jerdee, Driver's Education Instructor for Community Education beginning 1/15/2026. \$30.50/hr.
 - 5. Cecelia Kivell, General Education EA for .25 hours/day and Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hrs/day at Bridgewater beginning 1/27/2026. General Ed - Step 1, \$19.79/hr. Special Ed - Step 1, \$21.86/hr.
 - 6. Emmett Norrie, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 15 hrs/week at Spring Creek and Greenvale Park beginning 1/20/2026. Step 1, \$18.71/hr.
 - ii. Increase/Decrease/Changes in Assignment
 - 1. Briana Lanham, KidVentures Site Assistant for 28.5 hrs/week at Spring Creek, change to KidVentures Site Leader for up to 35 hrs/week at Spring Creek effective 1/12/2026-1/31/2026. Step 6, \$27.40/hr.
 - 2. Alisa Larsen, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.15 hrs/day at the NCEC, add 4 hours on Friday afternoons effective 1/23/2026-6/10/2026.
 - 3. Mariana Ramos, Long-Term Substitute ABE Office Generalist for up to 10 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to Substitute ABE Office Generalist on call, as needed effective 2/5/2026.
 - iii. Leave of Absences
 - 1. Sarah Bloom, Teacher at Greenvale Park, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning approximately 8/27/2026 and continuing through 1/27/2027.
 - 2. Amanda Feldmann, Teacher at Greenvale Park, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning approximately 8/27/2026 and continuing through 2/5/2027.
 - 3. Stacy Garry, Special Education EA/PCA at Spring Creek, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning 1/19/2026 and continuing through 4/6/2026.
 - 4. Aimee Gerdesmeier, KidVentures Site Leader at Spring Creek, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning 1/9/2026 and continuing through 1/30/2026.
 - iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
 - 1. Molly Andrews, Educational Assistant at the Middle School, termination effective 1/13/2026.
 - 2. Nancy Antoine, Principal at Bridgewater, retirement effective 6/30/2026.
 - 3. Linda Kovach, Teacher at the Middle School, retirement effective 6/10/2026. Linda will continue as a substitute.
 - 4. Karl Viesselman, Teacher at the High School, retirement effective 6/10/2026.
 - 5. Molly Viesselman, Director of Human Resources for the District, retirement effective 6/30/2026.

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. Stadium Naming Rights Contract. On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Epstein, the board unanimously approved by roll call the stadium naming rights contract with Heritage Bank for \$18,000 annually for ten years, naming the facility Heritage Bank Stadium at Memorial Field. Following the process established in Policy 809.1, the district requested proposals for stadium naming rights to Memorial Field with a Dec. 1, 2025 deadline and a minimum annual bid of \$12,000. Heritage Bank submitted the highest bid at \$18,000 annually for ten years. Voting 'yes' were Epstein, Goerwitz, Miller, Quinnell, and Butler. No one voted 'no'.
- b. Approval of Bid for District MacBook Air Laptop Purchase. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Epstein, the board unanimously approved by roll call the final bid recommendation for the purchase of the district's decommissioned fleet of MacBook Air laptops. All bids for the sale of approximately 411 MacBook Airs were received at 201 Orchard Street South, Northfield, MN on or before Tuesday, January 20, 2026, by 3:00 p.m. Director of Technology Services Nate Knutson and Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf opened the bids on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 3:00 p.m and recommended the sale of the district-owned MacBook Air laptops to Tech Reboot Inc. at a guaranteed minimum price of \$142,000. Voting 'yes' were Epstein, Goerwitz, Miller, Quinnell, and Butler. No one voted 'no'.

8. Items for Information

- a. Paraprofessional Recognition Week. January 19-23, 2026 was Paraprofessional Recognition Week in Minnesota. Northfield Public Schools proudly acknowledges the dedication and hard work of our educational assistants. Educational assistants play a vital role in supporting instruction, providing personal care services, and so much more. We are grateful for their commitment and thank them for the impact they have on our students.

9. Future Meetings

- a. Thursday, January 29, 2026, 5:00 p.m., Board Work Session, Northfield DO Boardroom (Topic: Later School Start Times)
- b. Monday, February 9, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- c. Monday, February 23, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- d. Monday, March 9, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved by roll call to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Voting 'yes' were Epstein, Goerwitz, Miller, Quinnell, and Butler. No one voted 'no'.



Maggie Epstein
School Board Clerk