

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

January 27, 2025
District Office Board Room

1. Call to Order
School 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: Butler, Gonzalez-George, Miller, Nelson, and Quinnell. Absent: Epstein and Goerwitz. 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 Quinnell, seconded by Butler, the board approved the agenda.
3. Public Comment
There was no public comment.
4. Announcements and Recognitions
 - Congratulations to Jody Saxton West who received the 1AA Fine Arts Distinguished Service Award for her contribution to speech and fine arts. Jody was nominated by previous Northfield High School Activities Director Tom Graupman and was recognized on Thursday, January 23.
 - Congratulations to the Gator-Raider Boys Swimming and Diving team who placed third in True Team State on Saturday, January 18.
 - Eight BPA students will be advancing to the state competition held in Minneapolis in March. Congratulations to Zane Engels, Nick Eschen, Josh Goerdt, Caley Graber, Aki Gupta, Makena Malecha, Olivia Voigt and Tristan Westergren.
 - Congratulations to Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George who received this year's Rising Star Award from the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA). Claudia was recognized on January 16 during the MSBA's annual leadership conference. The Rising Star award is awarded to an exemplary school board member serving within the first four years of their term.
5. Items for Discussion and Reports
 - a. Indigenous (American Indian) Parent Meeting and Service Update. Director of Instructional Services Hope Langston and Indigenous Family Cultural Liaison Sybil Betsinger shared the activities associated with improving services to Indigenous students and families.
 - b. Bond Presale Report. Jeff Seeley with Ehlers, Inc. presented the presale report for the first NHS construction project bond sale and requested the board approve the resolution authorizing the approval of the sale of general obligation school building bonds for \$39,000,000. This bond sale is the first of two, with the second issue being planned in 2027.
 - c. Financial Forecast. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf provided an updated financial forecast with the anticipated budget reduction targets for the 2025-26 school year.
 - d. 2025-2026 School Calendar. Superintendent Hillmann presented the 2025-2026 school year calendar. This will be an item for individual action at the next board meeting.
 - e. Summary of Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation. Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George shared her summary of the superintendent's mid-year performance evaluation.
 - f. Construction Update No. 4. Dr. Hillmann provided an update on the NHS construction project.
6. Committee Reports
 - a. District Youth Council (DYC) Committee Report. Board Member Miller provided an update on the DYC.

- b. Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative (CVSEC) Committee Report. Board Member Goerwitz submitted an update on the CVSEC.

7. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Butler, seconded by Miller, the board approved the consent agenda.

- a. Minutes.

Minutes of the organizational school board meeting held on January 13, 2025.

Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on January 13, 2025.

- b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements included in the board packet.

- c. Overnight Field Trips.

Northfield High School Robotics Team Head Coach Nicholas Connor requested board approval to take the robotics team to the Northern Lights Regional Competition in Duluth, MN, February 27-March 1, 2025.

Northfield High School Robotics Team Head Coach Nicholas Connor requested board approval to take the robotics team to the North Star Regional Competition in Minneapolis, April 3-5, 2025.

- d. Personnel Items.

- i. Appointments

1. Macayla Battin, Long Term Substitute Building Nurse for 8 hrs/day for 2 days/week at the NCEC, beginning 2/3/2025-2/28/2025. MSN/RN-Step 4.
2. Garret Bitker, Speech Judge at the High School, beginning 1/27/2025. \$100/event.
3. Silvia Campagna, Speech Judge at the High School, beginning 1/27/2025. \$100/event.
4. Kasie Larsen, Instructor Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, beginning 5/5/2025 - 5/31/2025. Step 1-\$14.50/hr.
5. Elsa Mitchell, Instructor Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, beginning 4/7/2025 - 5/31/2025. Step 1-\$14.50/hr.
6. Maia Richardson, Instructor Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, beginning 2/15/2025 - 5/31/2025. Step 1-\$14.50/hr.
7. Michael Shaeffer, Special Ed EA PCA for 7 hours/day at the High School, beginning 2/3/2025. Step 4-\$19.86/hr. + prorated PCA stipend.

- ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment

1. Jennifer Antoine, Special Ed EA for 35 hours/week at the NCEC, change to .90 FTE Long Term Substitute Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, effective approximately 2/28/2025-6/6/2025. BA, Step 1.
2. Macayla Battin, Long Term Substitute Nurse at the NCEC, add Long Term Substitute Nurse at the Middle School, effective 12/20/2024-3/5/2025. MSN/RN-Step 4
3. Taylor Choudek, .90 FTE Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, change to .75 FTE Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, effective 1/13/2025-end date TBD.
4. Kasie Larsen, Instructor Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, add Lifeguard with Community Ed Recreation, effective 5/5/2025-5/31/2025. Step 1-\$14.50/hr.
5. Jason Mosley, Co-Head Softball Coach at the High School, change to Head Softball Coach at the High School, effective 3/10/2025.
6. Cale Steinhoff, Head Boys Soccer Coach at the High School, add Building Supervisor with Community Ed Recreation, effective 1/19/2025. \$19.32/hr.
7. Brigitte Tisdale, .80 FTE Title I Teacher at Greenvale Park, add .15 FTE Title I Teacher at St. Dominic, effective 1/23/2025-6/6/2025.

- iii. Leave of Absence

1. Natalie Giles, Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, childcare leave of absence beginning on or about May 5, 2025 for 12 work weeks (60 work days). This leave will begin in the 2024-25 school year and end in the 2025-26 school year.
2. Maimouna Toure-Keita, District Nurse, Leave of absence beginning 3/3/2025-4/4/2025.
3. Brooke Bulfer, HR Generalist at the District Office, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning 2/5/2025 and continue on an intermittent basis for up to 60 work days.

- iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations

1. Josten Coleman, Head Softball Coach at the High School, resignation effective 1/20/2025.
2. Dustin Evsich, Custodian at the Middle School, resignation effective 1/31/2025.
3. Garrett Gray, KidVentures Site Assistant with Community Education, resignation effective 1/27/2025.
4. Kristi Kortuem, Head Girls Swim and Dive Coach at the High School, resignation effective 1/22/2025.
5. Brennan Ludwig, Custodian Engineer at the High School, resignation effective 1/28/2025.

6. Cheryl Mathison, Work Experience Teacher at the ALC, retirement effective at the end of the 2024-2025 school year. Will continue as a substitute.
7. Bob Pagel, Football Offensive Coordinator at the High School, resignation effective 1/22/2025.

*Conditional offers of employment are subject to successful completion of a criminal background check and Pre-work screening (if applicable)

8. Items for Individual Action

- a. Resolution Authorizing the Sale of General Obligation School Building Bonds, Series 2025A. On a motion by Gonzalez-George, seconded by Butler, the board authorized by roll call the issuance and sale of its general obligation school building bonds for the NHS construction project in the amount of \$39,000,000, as authorized by the passage of the bond referendum on November 5, 2024 by district voters. Voting 'yes' was Butler, Miller, Nelson, Quinnell, and Gonzalez-George. No one voted 'no.'
- b. Board Committee Assignments. On a motion by Butler, seconded by Nelson, the board approved board member committee appointments and representation to various organizations and school liaisons for calendar year 2025.

9. Items for Information

- a. Paraprofessional Recognition Week. January 20-26, 2025 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, assisting with virtual learning, 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.

10. Future Meetings

- a. Saturday, February 1, 2025, 9:00-10:45 a.m., Workshop, NCRC
- b. Saturday, February 1, 2025, 11:00 a.m., District Youth Council Brunch, NCRC
- c. Monday, February 10, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- d. Monday, February 24, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- e. Monday, March 10, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Miller, the board approved to adjourn at 7:57 p.m.



Amy Goerwitz
School Board Clerk