

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

February 10, 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 6:02 p.m. Present: Butler, Epstein, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Miller, Nelson, and Quinnell. 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 Butler, seconded by Quinnell, the board unanimously approved the agenda.

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. Announcements and Recognitions

- Hand in Hand Preschool, Early Ventures Learning Center and Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) will hold an open house on Tuesday, February 25 at the Northfield Community Education Center from 5:45 – 7:00 p.m. Families can tour the building, see classrooms, and meet staff.
- Andy Amundson and Makayah Petricka recently qualified for the Nordic State Tournament to be held February 12-13 at Giants Ridge Golf and Ski Resort in Biwabik.
- The alpine ski teams recently competed in conference and section races. The girls team won the title for the third year in a row, and the boys finished in second place at the Big 9 Conference Championship race at Mt. Kato. At the Section 6 Championship race at Buck Hill, the girls team finished in third place, and the boys team finished in fourth place. Congratulations to the racers Clara Wilson, Madison Loritz, Bode Bulfer and Tommy Cahoon. They qualified to compete in the state competition on February 11 at Giants Ridge.
- NHS hosted over 200 athletes at the Olympic Weightlifting meet on Saturday, February 1. Three school records were broken by Stephen Feig: the snatch record, 81 kg; the clean and jerk record, 101 kg; and the total for all lifts, 182 kg.
- NHS Raider Speech earned first place in the small school division at the Rochester John Marshall Speech tournament on February 8. Contributing to the win were two category champions: Elizabeth McCormick in Great Speeches and Aki Gupta in Discussion.
- Jody Saxton West has been named the NFHS Outstanding Speech and Debate Educator for Minnesota. Jody has coached Northfield's speech team and judged competitions since 2002.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

- a. Arcadia and Prairie Creek Site Visits. Superintendent Hillmann and Director Daryl Kehler visited Prairie Creek Charter School on January 30, 2025, and Director Kehler visited Arcadia Charter School on January 31, 2025. Director Kehler provided a report regarding both visits.
- b. Proposed 2025-2026 Operating Capital and Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Budget. Val Mertesdorf, Director of Finance, presented the 2024-2025 Operating Capital Budget and Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Plan. Justin Raabolle, Director of Buildings & Grounds, was available for questions. The board will be asked to adopt the budget at the February 24, 2025 board meeting.
- c. Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Ten Year and Indoor Air Quality Management Plan. Director Raabolle and Director Mertesdorf reviewed the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance ten year revenue and expenditure plan. Director Raabolle also reviewed the indoor air quality management plan. The board will be asked to approve the ten year plan, including the air quality management component, at the February 24, 2025 board meeting. The approved plans must be submitted to the Department of Education.

- d. Priority-Based Budget Reduction Process Updates. Superintendent Hillmann and Director Mertesdorf updated the board about the upcoming priority-based budget reduction process described at the January 27, 2025 regular meeting.
- e. Legislative Session Update. Superintendent Hillmann shared the 2025 Minnesota Legislature's session and briefly reviewed the Minnesota School Boards Association and the Minnesota Association of School Administrators platforms.
- f. Policy Committee Recommendations. Dr. Hillmann presented the policy committee's recommended updates to policies 406, 407, 408, 519, 614 and 701. This will be an item for individual action at the February 24, 2025 board meeting.
- g. Construction Update No. 5 and Change Order Procedures for the NHS Project. Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on the NHS construction project, and Superintendent Hillmann and Director Mertesdorf outlined the proposed change order procedures associated with the Reimagine Northfield High School bond projects. This will be an item for individual action at the February 24, 2025 board meeting.

6. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on January 27, 2025.
- b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements included in the board packet.
- c. Grant Application. Director of Community Education Erin Bailey requested school board approval for \$445,068.75 from the Minnesota Department of Education for the FY26 Grow Your Own Grant. Northfield Public Schools and Faribault Public Schools were joint applicants for this grant. Together, service-learning experiential programming will be co-led to encourage high school students, especially students of color, to pursue teaching careers.
- d. Financial Report. Director of Finance Mertesdorf requested the board approve paid bills totaling \$2,242,625.98, payroll checks totaling \$3,737,626.59, a wire transfer totaling \$300,000 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$350,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for September 2024. No bond payments were paid in September 2024. At the end of September 2024 total cash and investments amounted to \$26,424,246.92.
- e. Personnel Items.
 - i. Appointments
 - 1. Gabriel Meerts, .75 FTE Special Ed Teacher at the Middle School, beginning 2/3/2025. MA, Step 10
 - 2. Jack Christy, 1.0 FTE Custodian at the Middle School, beginning 2/24/2025. Step 5-\$22.58/hr.
 - 3. Jess Hathaway, Instructor Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, beginning 2/8/2025 - 5/31/2025. Step 6-\$15.80/hr.
 - ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment
 - 1. Teresa Hasse, General Ed EA at Spring Creek, add Special Ed EA Bus for 1.25 hours/day at Spring Creek, effective 2/3/2025-6/6/2025.
 - 2. Samantha Olson, Teacher at Spring Creek, add Community School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week at Spring Creek, effective 1/30/2024-5/15/2025. \$40/hr.
 - 3. Eustacio Lazaro Chavez, Custodian at the High School, change to Custodian Engineer without a license at the High School, effective 2/7/2025. \$27.60/hr.
 - iii. Leave of Absence
 - 1. Morgan Christofferson, Nurse at Greenvale Park, FMLA leave of absence beginning on or about 5/10/2025 through 9/30/25.
 - 2. Lisa Koktavy, Administrative Support Assistant at the NCEC, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning 4/14/2025-approximately 5/26/2025.
 - iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
 - 1. Kathy Flicek, Kindergarten Teacher at Greenvale Park, retirement effective 6/22/2025.
 - 2. Mark Thornton, Teacher at the High School, retirement effective at the end of the 2024-2025 school year.
 - 3. Beth Lacanne, Assistant Boys Tennis Coach at the High School, resignation effective 2/7/2025.

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

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. Resolution Requiring Administration to Make Recommendations Regarding Programming and Staffing for Next Year. On a motion by Gonzalez-George, seconded by Epstein, the board unanimously 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 Butler, Epstein, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Miller, Nelson and Quinnell. No one voted 'no'.
- b. Proposed 2025-2026 School Year Calendar. On a motion by Butler, seconded by Miller, the board unanimously approved the 2025-2026 School Year Calendar as presented.

8. Items for Information

- a. Enrollment Report. Superintendent Hillmann reviewed the February 2025 enrollment report.

9. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, February 24, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, March 10, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- c. Monday, April 14, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Goerwitz, the board approved to adjourn at 7:40 p.m.



Amy Goerwitz
School Board Clerk