

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

March 8, 2021

District Office Boardroom

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, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. Absent: Goerwitz. 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; Joel Leer, Northfield High School Principal, and Kim Briske, Director of Technology Services. Also present was Sam Wilmes, reporter for 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 Baraniak, 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 March 8, 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

- Dr. Hillmann shared the board's appreciation for our newly remodeled boardroom and walked through audio and video protocols for both the board and the public.

V. Items for Discussion and Reports

A. High School Mascot Refresh

Principal Leer updated the board on the mascot refresh as directed by the Northfield School Board. Twenty proposed designs were submitted to Northfield High School administration for review. Those designs were brought to a committee of staff, administration, students, alumni, and community stakeholders to review and determine finalists. Three designs will be enhanced by Neuger Communications in preparation for the student body advisory vote. The school board will review the student vote data as well as the three final designs, and use that data along with administrative input on the process to approve the new mascot. The new mascot options will be presented at the April 12 board meeting and approval of the updated Raider mascot will be an item for individual action at the April 26 board meeting.

B. Teacher Laptop Lease Refresh

Director Briske presented the proposed lease for refreshing teacher laptop computers. The current lease expires June 30, 2021. In order to keep our staff technology up to date and performing well, Director Briske is recommending a new lease agreement. With recent changes to the MacBook line, we can lease the MacBook Air, which provides very similar performance to the MacBook Pro model with the configurations we recommend. Both the MacBook Pro and the MacBook Air can be configured to the exact same technical specifications. The MacBook Air provides a significant savings at \$1,309/device as compared to the Pro at \$1,579/device. Director Briske recommends the district renew the lease agreement for 400 each MacBook Airs at a cost of \$127,400 each year for four years. This will be an item for individual action at the April 12 board meeting.

Goerwitz arrived at 7:49 p.m.

C. Facility Rental and Service Fees

Director Bailey submitted her recommendation regarding the rental and service fees that cover maintenance, operations and staffing facilities. The board annually reviews the rental and service fees in compliance with Policy 902 Use of School District Facilities and Equipment Procedures. Director Bailey recommended no changes to Policy 902 and did recommend updating the procedures that accompany Policy 902 to reflect the addition of rentable conference rooms located at the Northfield School District Office.

D. Proposed 2021-2022 Internal Service Fund

Director Mertesdorf presented the proposed 2021-2022 Internal Service Fund Budget. The purpose of the Internal Service Fund is to record the financial transactions of the district's self-insured health and dental plan. Director Mertesdorf included a revised 2020-2021 budget for this fund. The board will be asked to adopt the 2021-2022 budget at the May 10, 2021 board meeting. The board will be asked to adopt the 2020-2021 revised budget at the April 12 board meeting.

E. Legislative Update

Dr. Hillmann and the Legislative Action Committee provided a legislative update and identified key areas of interest. The February forecast changed significantly and is forecast at \$1.6B surplus over the next biennium. We are a low property wealth district and we are interested in increasing referendum equalization aid and lobbying for it to stay in the tax bill versus the education bill. The Governor has a proposal which addresses declining enrollment aid and funding for summer programming and we are watching that closely, and we are working to maintain the two-tiered licensing system for educators that was put into effect a few years ago. Additionally we are asking the legislature to demonstrate restraint and limit and/or suspend any new policy initiatives this year.

F. Policy Committee Recommendations

Dr. Hillmann presented the policy committee's recommendations on policy 438. Revisions on policy 430 are in progress and policy 436 goes to Meet and Confer prior to coming to the board for a first reading and approval. The committee also reviewed policies 428, 434 and 437 and found no substantive changes.

G. American Indian Parent Meeting

Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on the annual American Indian Parent meeting held on Thursday, February 25, 2021. We have approximately 10 students that identify as Indigenous and two families attended the meeting. We asked families what is going well and how the district could better service students. The district has a small grant available and we are assessing how these funds may be used. The American Indian Parent Committee recommended meeting three times each year.

H. COVID-19 Response and Operations Update

Superintendent Hillmann informed the board that over half our total staff will receive their second COVID vaccination on March 10. Depending on the number of people who experience side effects, it may impact our ability to staff our schools. We have proactively shifted all K-12 classes to a distance learning day on Thursday, March 11.

The district's spring break is March 22-26, 2021 and we are encouraging all families and students to take a COVID test upon their return after spring break. We plan to return middle school, high school, and ALC students back to full-time, in person learning on Wednesday, March 31, 2021.

VI. Consent Agenda

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

A. Minutes

- Minutes of the Special Closed School Board meeting held on February 22, 2021
- Minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on February 22, 2021

B. Gift Agreement

- \$5,452.31 from Wayne R. Stickley and Jennifer A. Tuma Memorial Scholarship Fund for scholarships

C. Financial Reports

1. Financial Report - October 2020

Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requested that the Board approve paid bills totaling \$2,344,110.91, payroll checks totaling \$3,446,860.38, a wire transfer totaling \$771,961.08 from MN Trust Bldg Bond to MSDLAF Liquid, a wire transfer totaling \$350,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$350,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for October 2020. At the end of October 2020 total cash and investments amounted to \$35,641,001.18.

2. Financial Report - November 2020

Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requested that the Board approve paid bills totaling \$1,944,119.44, payroll checks totaling \$3,382,167.72, a wire transfer totaling \$771,961.08 from MN Trust Bldg Bond to MSDLAF Liquid, a wire transfer totaling \$200,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$250,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for November 2020. At the end of November 2020 total cash and investments amounted to \$45,231,747.84.

3. Financial Report - December 2020

Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requested that the Board approve paid bills totaling \$1,573,219.41, payroll checks totaling \$3,257,955.71, a wire transfer totaling \$400,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$350,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for December 2020. At the end of December 2020 total cash and investments amounted to \$44,670,252.15.

4. Financial Report - January 2021

Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requested that the Board approve paid bills totaling \$1,761,312.80, payroll checks totaling \$3,598,102.53, bond payments totaled \$17,003,837.51, a wire transfer totaling \$2,000,000.00 from MN Trust Oper to MSDLAF Liquid, \$10,761,382.53 from MN Trust Bond Refunding to MSDLAF Liquid, \$2,002,502.51 from MN Trust Bldg Bond to MSDLAF Liquid, a wire transfer totaling \$1,000,000.00 MSDLAF Max to MSDAF Liquid, \$500,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$500,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for January 2021. At the end of January 2021 total cash and investments amounted to \$26,829,609.97.

D. Personnel

a) Appointments

1. Bea Chang, Early Ventures Site Assistant for 10 hours/week at the NCEC, beginning 3/9/2021-5/31/2021; Step 1-\$13.61/hr.
2. Solvei Christopherson, Fall, Winter, & Spring Recreation position with Community Education, beginning 3/2/2021-5/31/2021; \$10.08/hr.
3. Anna Hershberger, General Ed EA-Media for 5.5 hours/day at Greenvale Park, beginning 3/8/2021; Gen Ed Step 1-\$15.45/hr.
4. Shana Hodel, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute English Learner Teacher at the Middle School, beginning 4/12/2021-6/10/2021; BA40, Step 1
5. Kyle Korynta, .60 FTE Assistant Track & Field Coach for 2 hours/day for 3 days/week at the High School, beginning 3/29/2021; Level F, Step 4 .60 FTE
6. Tania Legvold, Production Coordinator for RRR for 2 hours/day for 3 days/week at the High School, beginning 3/8/2021; Level F, Step 1
7. Sophia Nevin, Special Ed EA-PCA for 6.75 hours/day and Gen Ed EA for .25 hours/day at Sibley, beginning 3/1/2021-6/10/2021; Special Ed Step 1-\$16.05/hr. Gen Ed Step 1-\$15.45/hr.
8. Correction: Joey Silknitter, Community School Club Leader for up to 2 hours/day for up to 4 days/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 1/11/2021-6/10/2021; \$22.27/hr.
9. Innana Antley, 1.0 FTE Early Ventures Teacher at the NCEC, beginning 3/15/2021; Step 4-\$18.29/hr.

10. Luis Diaz, Community School Club Leader for up to 3 hours/day for 2 days/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 3/11/2021-6/10/2021; \$22.27/hr.
 11. Courtney Gilomen, Special Ed EA-PCA for 6.75 hours/day at Greenvale Park, beginning 3/15/2021; Spec Ed Step 3-\$16.75/hr.
 12. Brianna Theis, Special Ed EA-PCA for 6.75 hours/day at the Middle School, beginning 3/12/2021; Step 1-\$16.05/hr.
 13. Craig Wasner, Rock N Roll Revival-Band Leader for 2 hours/day at the High School, beginning 3/8/2021; Level F, Step 10
 14. Kathy Wiertsema-Miller, .65 FTE Licensed School Counselor at the High School, beginning 3/4/2021-6/10/2021; MA40, Step 15
- b) Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment
1. Jill Bohlen, Special Ed EA-PCA at Greenvale Park, add Special Ed EA PCA Bus for 1.08 hours/day for 2 days every other week with the District, effective 2/26/2021-6/10/2021.
 2. Kayla Christmas, Special Ed EA-PCA at Greenvale Park, add Special Ed EA PCA Bus for 1.08 hours/day for 8 days every two weeks with the District, effective 2/26/2021-6/10/2021.
 3. Mark Ensrud, High School Counselor, overload for 4th quarter in lieu of supervision.
 4. Allison Ims, EA PCA Health Aide for 12.25 hours/week at St. Dominic, add EA PCA Health Aide at Greenvale Park for a total of 19.75 hours/week, effective 3/1/2021-6/10/2021.
 5. Anna Kelly, Media Center EA for 5.50 hours/day at Greenvale Park, change to Media Center EA for 8 hours/day at the High School, effective 3/8/2021.
 6. Mary Magnuson, Regular Substitute with the District, add Due Process Support for an additional 60 hours at the High School, effective 3/1/2021-6/10/2021.
 7. Melvin Miller, Yearbook Advisor and Golf Coach at the High School, add Gen Ed Supervisory-Door Supervision for 5.75 hours/day at the High School, effective 3/1/2021-6/10/2021; Gen Ed Step 3-\$16.17/hr.
 8. Grace Schultz, Hand in Hand General Education Teacher for 40 hours/week at the NCEC, change to Hand in Hand General Education Teacher for 30 hours/week at the NCEC, effective 3/19/2021.
 9. Christina Suhsen, Special Ed EA-PCA at NCEC, add Special Ed EA PCA Bus for 1.50 hours/day for each Friday with the District, effective 3/5/2021-6/10/2021.
 10. Bob Sullivan, Teacher at the High School, add .4 Assistant Track & Field Coach at the High School, 2 hrs/day, 2 days/week, effective 3/29/2021; Level F, Step 1
 11. Carina Zick, Special Ed EA-PCA at Sibley, add Special Ed EA PCA Extracurricular/nonacademic hours are variable with the District, effective 3/1/2021-6/10/2021.
 12. Lucy Archibald, job share arrangement for the Bridgewater Elementary nurse position will continue through the 2021-22 school year.
 13. Brittany Braucher, CNA I- on Leave of Absence at the High School, change to CNA I for 3.75 hours/day at the High School, effective 3/30/2021.
 14. Courtney Gilomen, Special Ed EA-PCA at Greenvale Park, add General Ed EA 0.5 hours/day at Greenvale Park, effective 3/15/2021; Gen Ed Step 3-\$16.17/hr.
 15. Melody Leidall, job share arrangement for the Bridgewater Elementary nurse position will continue through the 2021-22 school year.
- c) Leave of Absence
1. Grace Schultz, Hand in Hand Gen Ed Teacher at the NCEC, Family/Medical Leave of Absence, beginning on or about 6/3/2021-10/1/2021.
 2. Mark Johnson, Teacher at the Middle School, Extended Leave of Absence for 3 years starting with the 2021-2022 school year.
 3. Paula Seeberg, Teacher at Sibley, Extended Leave of Absence for 3 years starting with the 2021-2022 school year.
 4. Linda Temple, Teacher at Bridgewater, Leave of Absence for the 2021-2022 school year.
 5. Earl Weinmann, Teacher at the Middle School, Extended Leave of Absence for 3 years starting with the 2021-2022 school year.
- d) Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
1. Jay Grossmann, Custodian Engineer at Greenvale Park, termination of employment effective 2/23/2021.
 2. Iain Hood, Custodian at the High School, resignation effective 2/23/2021.
 3. Lisa Hood, Special Ed Teacher at the NCEC, resigned effective at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.
 4. Lesly Martinez Reyes, Special Ed EA at Bridgewater, resignation effective 2/22/2021.
 5. Jacie Myers, Special Education Teacher at Greenvale Park, resignation effective at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.
 6. Margaret Witt, Instructional Coach - Behavior at Sibley, retirement effective 8/31/2021.

E. Grant Application Approval

Director Bailey requested board approval of a \$32,000.00 grant request from Northfield United Way. PRIMEtime provides low-income and at-risk Northfield children with free mentoring, tutoring, skill-building workshops, and cultural enrichment programs after school and over the summer. The target population includes children at risk of academic failure and low-income youth receiving free/reduced price lunches. If received, this grant will provide after school and summer enrichment to over 850 Northfield youth in Kindergarten through 8th grade July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022.

VII. Superintendent's Report

A. Items for Individual Action

1. Budget Containment. On a motion by Baraniak, seconded by Goerwitz, the board authorized district administration to enact the following strategies:

- Early retirement incentive for teachers, office employees and educational assistants
- Exploring advertising revenue in key locations throughout the district
- Utilizing an online payment vendor for activity officials
- Utilizing a maintenance ticket system to allocate staff salaries to LTFM on a project basis

VIII. Items for Information

A. Enrollment Report. Superintendent Hillmann reviewed the March 2021 Enrollment Report.

IX. Future Meetings

- A. Monday, April 12, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield District Office Boardroom
- B. Monday, April 26, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield District Office Boardroom
- C. Monday, May 10, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield District Office Boardroom

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Goerwitz, the board adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Noel Stratmoen
School Board Clerk