

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

May 26, 2020
Teleconference

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. Due to the current state emergency declaration, the Minnesota directive and guidance about limiting person-to-person contact due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was conducted via video conference in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 13D.021. In addition, the school board determined that it was not feasible for at least one board member, or the superintendent to be physically present at the regular meeting location and that it was not feasible for the public to attend this meeting at the regular location. The district did make accommodations for public comment which are outlined below. This meeting was live-streamed.

Board member attendance was taken by roll call. Anita Aase, Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board of Education, called the name of each board member in alphabetical order by last name and the board member responded “present” when his/her name was called. Present: Baraniak, Goerwitz, Hardy, Iverson, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. Absent: None.

Also present at this video conference meeting was: Dr. Matt Hillmann, Superintendent; Anita Aase; and Erin Bailey, Director of Community Education; Daryl Kehler, Director of the Area Learning Center; and Sal Bagley from Wold Architects & Engineering. Observing the meeting via Zoom was Sam Wilmes, reporter with the Northfield News. This meeting was live streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted to the school district website.

Board Chair Pritchard outlined the procedures for this meeting:

- Board members were asked to mute their microphone when not speaking.
- During the course of the meeting when a motion and a second is required, Dr. Hillmann would initiate the “unmute” for all board members.
- At the start of each discussion Chair Pritchard said she would call on each board member in alphabetical order by last name for any questions or comments. If they didn’t wish to speak, they would be welcome to pass.
- There would be one round of questioning for board members. If board members had a follow-up question or comment, they could consider using the Raise Hand feature in order to be recognized by the Chair.
- All votes on the Items for Individual Action would be conducted by roll call by Aase. Each board member was instructed to wait until their name was called before voting.
- In the event of a power outage, the meeting would continue if we had a quorum. If we would not have a quorum, the meeting would be recessed until a quorum could convene.

II. Agenda Approval/Table File

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Iverson, the Board approved the agenda by roll call. Voting ‘yes’ were Baraniak, Goerwitz, Hardy, Iverson, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted ‘no’.

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 May 26, 2020. All submissions that followed the district policy regarding public comment would be read by Chair Pritchard at this time. There were no public comments submitted for this Board meeting.

IV. Announcements and Recognitions

- In lieu of our large Cinco de Mayo community celebration, a virtual celebration was held on May 5. This celebration included welcomes from Mayor Rhonda Pownell and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Matt

Hillmann. Previously recorded performances by Baile Folklorico were shared and two \$1000 scholarships were awarded.

- Northfield High School is delighted to announce 111 students are being recognized by the United Nations Association of the USA and InnerView in the 2nd Annual National Community Service Awards. This program has been designed to connect student community service activities and commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to transform our world. Students from Northfield High School delivered the most impact for SDG 3-Good Health & Well-Being.
- Since distance learning began, the Northfield National Honor Society members have logged over 350 hours of community service.

V. Items for Discussion and Reports

- A. COVID-19/Distance Learning Update/District Operations. Dr. Hillmann focused his update on grading practices for fourth quarter and second semester. He highlighted the summer free meals, emergency child care, summer programming, extended school year, and community education programs. The abrupt change to distance learning has changed the way students engage in learning. Continuing with the same grading practices designed for a face-to-face learning environment was not appropriate. Early in the distance learning period, district secondary schools (Grades 6-12) announced some changes to their grading structures: Northfield Middle School moved to a pass/fail system; Northfield High School and Northfield ALC moved to a hybrid system; Northfield Elementary Schools will not issue a traditional report card at the end of the year and teachers will have a closure conference with every family. School handbooks reference grading, are approved by the Board, and have the weight of policy. Therefore, the Board was asked to approve these changes to grading practices for the fourth quarter and second semester of the 2019-2020 school year at the May 26, 2020 school board meeting.

Summer child care is scheduled to begin on June 15, 2020. We are prioritizing enrollment based on families that commit to child care five (5) days each week and Tier I, Tier II and Tier III workers. The cost of child care will be \$45.00/day/child.

- B. Area Learning Center (ALC) Reauthorization. Daryl Kehler, ALC Director, discussed new state guidelines affecting ALCs. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is requiring formalized processes and documentation for State Approved Alternative Programs (SAAPs) in compliance with MN Statute 123A.05. Our plan will include a formalized partnership with Randolph and Tri-City United school districts, a mid-level program, and specific details will include teachers and areas of licensure, location/dates/times, budgets, resources and supports available, procedures and methods for identifying students for ALC, academic standards/graduation requirements, and the decision making process.
- C. Longfellow Building Name Change. Dr. Hillmann and Chair Pritchard facilitated a discussion about renaming the Longfellow School building to officially identify the Northfield Public Schools District Office and the Area Learning Center. The majority of board members indicated interest in renaming the building, but they want to know the history of the Longfellow School building name. The board would like the policy committee to develop a Facility Naming Policy with the intent of naming buildings based on their function.
- D. Handbooks - First Reading. Dr. Hillmann presented the Policy Committee's recommendations for the Child Nutrition Appendix and the 2020-2021 handbooks for: Elementary Schools, Middle School, High School, ALC, Parent Co-Curricular Handbook, and the Student Citizenship Handbook. This will be an item for individual action at the next Board meeting.
- E. Financial Update. Dr. Hillmann provided a brief financial update to the Board which included concerns about future legislative funding for schools, as well as the short term financial concerns brought forward by the emergency child care program and free meals distributed to families. The Minnesota Department of Education shared information about two relief programs: the GEER program and the ESSER program. The ESSER funds are part of the CARES Act and will be distributed to school districts based on Title I allocation

with mental health, summer school, technology and grants as priorities. We anticipate funds will be allocated in early June.

VI. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Hardy, seconded by Goerwitz the Board approved the following Consent Agenda items by roll call. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Goerwitz, Hardy, Iverson, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

A. Minutes

- Minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on May 11, 2020

B. Gift Agreements

- \$2,500 from VFW Post #4393 for scholarships

C. Personnel Items

a) Appointments

1. Chris Holmquist, .6 FTE Art Teacher at the High School, beginning 8/25/2020; BA, Step 14
2. Ella Stromme, .8 FTE Licensed Social Worker at the ALC/LF, beginning 8/25/2020; BA, Step 1-pending obtaining MN school social worker license.
3. Brent Dunkelberger, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute 7th Grade Math Teacher at the Middle School, beginning 8/25/2020; BA, Step 9
4. Heather Rose, 1.0 FTE 7th Grade Math Teacher at the Middle School, beginning 8/25/2020; MA, Step 10
5. Mollie Schwartz, 1.0 FTE Elementary Music Teacher at Sibley, beginning 8/25/2020; BA+20, Step 4

b) Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment

1. Mark Auge, Teacher at the High School, add ALC Summer School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week Mon.-Thur. at the ALC, effective 6/9/2020-7/23/2020.
2. Anne Campbell, Teacher at the High School, add ALC Summer School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week Mon.-Thur. at the ALC, effective 6/9/2020-7/23/2020.
3. Ray Coudret, Teacher at the High School, add ALC Summer School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week Mon.-Thur. at the ALC, effective 6/9/2020-7/23/2020.
4. Curt Mikkelson, Teacher at the Middle School, add ALC Summer School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week Mon.-Thur. at the ALC, effective 6/9/2020-7/23/2020.
5. Eric Swan McDonald, Teacher at the High School, add ALC Summer School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week Mon.-Thur. at the ALC, effective 6/9/2020-7/23/2020.
6. Sarah Swan McDonald, Teacher at the High School, add ALC Summer School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week Mon.-Thur. at the ALC, effective 6/9/2020-7/23/2020.
7. Inger Hanson, Teacher at the ALC, add Summer School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week at the ALC, effective 6/9/2020-6/25/2020.

c) Leave of Absence

1. Rebecca Meyers, extending childcare leave of absence through the 2020-2021 school year.
2. Jane Streitz, leave of absence under the emergency paid sick leave act, beginning May 26, 2020 through June 5, 2020.

d) Retirements/Resignations/Terminations

1. Linda Wasner, Educational Assistant at the High School, retirement effective at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.
2. John Schnorr, Speech Language Pathologist at the ALC, retirement effective at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

e) Administration is Recommending the Approval of the Following:

Administration submits the following employment contracts/agreements for approval. These contracts/ agreements cover the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022.

1. Community Education and Other Coordinators

VII. Superintendent's Report

A. Items for Individual Action.

1. Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative (CVSEC). On a motion by Iverson, seconded by Hardy, the Board approved the plan for CVSEC to lease 41,160 square feet at the Faribo West Mall beginning

with the 2021-2022 school year for 15 years. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Goerwitz, Hardy, Iverson, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

2. Audio/Visual Bid Approval. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Quinnell, the Board approved a contract be issued to Visual Services, Inc. (VSI) for district wide audio/visual at a cost of \$630,000.00, as well as Alternate No. 1 for \$4,200.00, Alternate No. 2 for \$1,400.00, Alternate No. 3 for \$2,650.00, and Alternate No. 4 for \$3,460.00, for a total contract cost of \$641,710.00. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Goerwitz, Hardy, Iverson, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.
3. Temporary Modification To Grading Practices In 2019-2020 Handbooks Due To Distance Learning And COVID-19. On a motion by Hardy, seconded by Baraniak, the Board approved a change to grading practices for the fourth quarter and second semester of the 2019-20 school year as presented. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Goerwitz, Hardy, Iverson, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

VIII. Items for Information

- A. Construction Update #27. Superintendent Hillmann and Sal Bagley from Wold Architects & Engineers, updated the Board on the District's construction projects.

IX. Future Meetings

- A. Monday, June 8, 2020, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting
- B. Monday, July 13, 2020, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting
- C. Monday, August 10, 2020, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Goerwitz, the Board approved adjournment by roll call at 9:01 p.m. Voting 'yes' were Baraniak, Goerwitz, Hardy, Iverson, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.

Noel Stratmoen
School Board Clerk