

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

August 24, 2026
District Office Board Room

1. Call to Order

School Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George 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, Gonzalez-George, Miller, and Quinnell. Absent: Nelson. 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.

3. Public Comment

There was one public comment.

4. Announcements and Recognitions

- One hundred twenty three (123) incoming kindergarten students completed Bridges to Kindergarten through Community Education last week. Bridges to Kindergarten is a free summer program held at each of the three elementary schools for one week to help ease the transition into kindergarten. Many thanks to the district preschool and kindergarten teachers, community preschool teachers, and educational assistants who worked in this program.
- The “Community School Report to the Community” was completed last month. The report details the results of last year's community school programming at Greenvale Park Elementary, Bridgewater Elementary, Spring Creek Elementary, and Northfield Middle School. The report is in the process of being shared with all elementary and middle school families. Thanks to everyone who assisted with the report's compilation.
- Last week, the elementary schools held special events to welcome families to the new school year. Spring Creek and Bridgewater had "Popsicles with the Principal" nights and had over 400 people in attendance. Greenvale Park's PTO hosted a "New Family Night" for kindergarten and new families planning to attend this fall. Thank you to our school PTOs and staff for supporting these events to build connections.
- Human Resources recently hosted two optional substitute orientation sessions and welcomed 50 attendees between the two sessions. The sessions provided an overview of substitute responsibilities and expectations, safety and security procedures, and the Frontline software program used by the district. Thank you to everyone who took the time to attend and invest in being prepared for a successful school year. We appreciate the important role our substitute staff play in supporting students, teachers, and schools across the district.
- District leadership recently gathered for their annual kickoff, centered on the theme of “Connection.” Leaders engaged in sessions like Working Genius and Managing Transitions to build capacity and clarity for the year ahead. A highlight was the overwhelming consensus on the theme. Nearly every participant noted, “It fits, and I can use it,” setting a powerful, unified tone for the back-to-school season and demonstrating that the leadership team is fully energized and aligned with our 2027 Strategic Plan.
- Dr. Anderson recognized Emily Culver from Healthy Community Initiative for her work with the District Youth Council. HCI is a community partner of the school district that provides various forms of support, including youth engagement, programs such as TORCH, community initiatives, and partnerships.
- Dr. Anderson also recognized Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George for her remarks at the District Youth Council's kickoff meeting today, providing encouragement and lauding their decision to serve. He applauded her and other board members' engaged citizenry through their service on the board.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

- a. Greenvale Park Elementary School Improvement Showcase. Greenvale Park Elementary Principal Sam Richardson provided the board with an overview of the school's successes and highlights in 2025-2026 and the focus areas for the 2026-2027 school year.
- b. Northfield Community Education School Improvement Showcase. Director of Community Education Erin Bailey provided the board with an overview of the NCEC successes and highlights in 2025-2026 and the

focus areas for the 2026-2027 school year.

- c. Superintendent's 2026-2027 Focus Areas. Dr. Anderson shared a draft of his focus areas for the 2026-27 school year. This will be an item for individual action at the next school board meeting.
- d. Later School Start Times Discussion. The board developed a survey to send to parents and caregivers during the month of June. Superintendent Anderson presented the results of that survey.

6. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on August 10, 2026.
- b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements included in the board packet.
- c. Personnel Items.
 - i. Appointments
 - 1. Jennifer Antoine, Early Ventures Teacher for 40 hours/week at the NCEC beginning 8/28/2026-1/29/2027. Step 6, \$24.09/hr.
 - 2. Annabella Becker, Assistant Dance Coach at the High School beginning 10/26/2026. \$5,191 stipend.
 - 3. Maisy Bull, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 6 hours/week at Greenvale Park beginning 9/14/2026. Step 1, \$19.27/hr.
 - 4. Richard Erickson, Lunch Supervision Educational Assistant for 2 hours/day at Bridgewater beginning 9/1/2026. Step 1, \$22.30/hr.
 - 5. Dana Holden, Math Lead at Bridgewater beginning 9/1/2026-6/11/2027. \$1,000 stipend.
 - 6. Hannah Koch, Special Education EA/PCA - Cross Country Student Support for 15 hours/week at the High School beginning 8/24/2026-10/14/2026. Step 4, \$23.98/hr.
 - 7. Hannah Koch, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hours/day at the Middle School beginning 8/31/2026. Step 4, \$23.98/hr.
 - 8. Lori Malecha, Long-Term Substitute Child Nutrition Associate I for 3.75 hours/day at Greenvale Park beginning 9/8/2026-11/24/2026. \$23.52/hr.
 - 9. Joshua Mogren, Community School Site Assistant for 2 hours/day at Greenvale Park beginning 9/22/2026-5/13/2027. Step 2, \$19.95/hr.
 - 10. Riley Moon, KidVentures Student Site Assistant for up to 15 hours/week at Spring Creek beginning 8/31/2026. Step 1, \$16.95/hr.
 - 11. Rebecca Pewu, Community School Club Leader for up to 10 hours/week beginning 9/22/2026. Step 3, \$21.79/hr.
 - 12. Rhonda Pownell, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hours/day plus .25 hours/day supervisory at Spring Creek beginning 8/31/2026. Step 4, \$23.98/hr.
 - 13. Evelyn Salgado, Assistant Girls Soccer Coach at the Middle School beginning 8/31/2026. \$2,884 stipend.
 - 14. Caitlin Robertson, 1.0 FTE Grade 6 Social Studies Teacher at the Middle School beginning 8/27/2026. MA, Step 10.
 - 15. Yazmin Rojas, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hours/day at Bridgewater beginning 8/31/2026. Step 4, \$23.98/hr.
 - 16. Dawn Valescu, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hours/day plus .25 hours/day supervisory at the Middle School beginning 8/31/2026. Step 4, \$23.98/hr.
 - 17. Parker Wilson, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 25 hours/week at Spring Creek beginning 8/31/2026. Step 1, \$19.27/hr.
 - 18. Updated: Molly Knutelski, 1.0 FTE Grade 6 Launch Teacher at the Middle School beginning 8/27/2026. MA+10, Step 6.
 - 19. Isabelle Kratage-Dixon, KidVentures Student Site Assistant for up to 15 hrs/week at Greenvale Park beginning 8/31/2026. Step 1, \$16.95/hr.
 - 20. Nicole Lazaro-Ascencio, KidVentures Site Assistant for 23 hrs/week at Greenvale Park beginning 8/31/2026. Step 1, \$19.27/hr.
 - 21. Lucina Martinez, Child Nutrition Associate I for 3.75 hrs/day at the High School beginning 8/20/2026. \$23.52/hr.
 - 22. Updated: Joanna McLees, .619 FTE Long-Term Substitute Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC beginning approximately 9/14/2026-1/1/2027. MA+10, Step 2.
 - 23. Dalton Morelan, KidVentures Student Site Assistant for up to 15 hrs/week at Greenvale Park beginning 8/31/2026. Step 1, \$16.95/hr.
 - 24. Madelyn Raabolle, KidVentures Student Site Assistant for up to 15 hrs/week at Spring Creek beginning 8/31/2026. Step 1, \$16.95/hr.

25. Suzanne Schroll, Community School Site Leader for up to 30 hrs/week at Bridgewater beginning 8/27/2026. Step 1, \$24.77/hr.
 26. Sophia Tietz, KidVentures Student Site Assistant for 23.5 hrs/week at Bridgewater beginning 8/31/2026. Step 1, \$16.95/hr.
- ii. Increase/Decrease/Changes in Assignment
1. Pamela Charlton, Teacher at Greenvale Park, add Community School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week at Greenvale Park effective 9/28/2026-5/13/2027. \$40/hr.
 2. Robert Coleman, EA at Spring Creek, add Bridges to Kindergarten EA for 3.5 hours/day at Spring Creek effective 8/17/2026-8/21/2026.
 3. Jan Ensrud, Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 4. Claire Gardner, Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 5. Leah Grisim, Special Education Teacher at Spring Creek, add Head Girls Soccer Coach at the Middle School effective 8/31/2026. \$3,461 stipend.
 6. Kari Hemmingsen, Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 7. Anna Kelly, Teacher at Greenvale Park, add Community School Teacher for up to 10 hours/week at Greenvale Park effective 9/28/2026-5/13/2027. \$40/hr.
 8. Heather Kuehl, Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 9. Brent Rauk, Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 10. Andrea Robbins, ECSE Teacher at the NCEC, add Administrative Transition Planning for up to 4 hours effective 7/1/2026-6/30/2027. \$40/hr.
 11. Jenna Schlatter, Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 12. Kyle Schmidt, EA at the NCEC, add Bridges to Kindergarten EA for 7 hours/day at Greenvale Park effective 8/17/2026-8/21/2026.
 13. Jessica Smieja, Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 14. Rebecca Stoufis, Special Education Teacher at the High School, add ESY Special Education Teacher for up to 12 hours effective 8/17/2026-8/21/2026. Lane/step.
 15. Elizabeth Winter, EA at Greenvale Park, add Bridges to Kindergarten EA for 7 hours/day at Greenvale Park effective 8/17/2026-8/21/2026.
 16. Kirsten Anderson, EA at Greenvale Park, add KidVentures Site Assistant for 2 hrs/week at Greenvale Park effective 8/31/2026.
 17. Wendy Apitz, KidVentures Site Assistant on call, as needed at Greenvale Park, change to up to 10 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 18. Wren Becker, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 40 hrs/week at Spring Creek, change to KidVentures Site Assistant for 22.25 hrs/week at Bridgewater effective 8/31/2026.
 19. Lucy Bell, KidVentures Site Assistant on call, as needed at Spring Creek, change to up to 15 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 20. Dylan Besch, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 40 hrs/week at Spring Creek, change to on call, as needed effective 9/8/2026.
 21. Kiwi Bielenberg, DAPE & POHD Teacher for the District, add ESY Physical Health Disability Consulting for up to 8 hours effective 6/10/2026-7/31/2026.
 22. Isabella Bisel, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 40 hrs/week at Spring Creek, change to on call, as needed effective 9/8/2026.
 23. Lori Bjork, Special Education Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 24. Amelia Brandt, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 40 hrs/week at Spring Creek, change to on call, as needed effective 9/8/2026.
 25. Owen Brownlee, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 40 hrs/week at Spring Creek, change to up to 10 hrs/week effective 9/8/2026.
 26. Seth Buckmeier, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 40 hrs/week at Spring Creek, change to on call, as needed effective 9/8/2026.
 27. Lexi Canedy, Special Education Teacher at Greenvale Park, add Navigating Behaviors Training for up to 40 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 28. Taylor Choudek, .568 FTE Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, change to .78 FTE effective 8/20/2026.
 29. Taylor Choudek, Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, add 8 hours for Co-Teaching training effective 8/20/2026-6/1/2027.
 30. Andria Cornell, Special Education Teacher at the Middle School, add STAR Training for up to 24 additional hours effective 8/4/2026-8/6/2026.

31. Anita Corwin, Early Ventures Site Assistant for 32 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 40 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 32. Josh Craft, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 40 hrs/week at Spring Creek, change to on call, as needed effective 9/8/2026.
 33. Danielle Crase, Special Education Teacher at the High School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 34. Matt Crase, Special Education Teacher at the High School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 35. Thomas Dickerson, Special Education Teacher at Bridgewater, add Navigating Behaviors Training - BEST project for up to 40 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 36. Mary Dobey, Teacher at the High School, add Junior Class/Prom Advisor effective 8/25/2026. \$2,549 stipend.
 37. Saffron Emerson, Special Education Teacher at the High School, add STAR Training for up to 24 additional hours effective 8/4/2026-8/6/2026.
 38. Adria Fischer, Early Ventures Teacher for 16 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 40 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 39. Sara Gerdesmeier, Early Ventures Site Assistant for 30 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 37.5 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026
 40. Natalie Giles, .568 FTE Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, change to .59 FTE effective 8/20/2026.
 41. Natalie Giles, Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, add 8 hours for Co-Teaching training effective 8/20/2026-6/1/2027.
 42. Carla Hoppe, Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, add 8 hours for Co-Teaching training effective 8/20/2026-6/1/2027.
 43. Monica Irwin, Special Education Teacher at the Middle School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 44. Zoe Jesh, Early Ventures Teacher for 35.5 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 40 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 45. Lisa Krueger Robb, Teacher at the High School, add Community School Licensed Teacher for up to 10 hrs/week effective 9/22/2026-5/13/2027. \$40/hr.
 46. Annie Kruse, ECSE Teacher at the NCEC, add START Training for up to 24 additional hours effective 8/4/2026-8/6/2026.
 47. Roman Lozano, Special Education Teacher at Greenvale Park, add Navigating Behaviors Training - BEST project for up to 40 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 48. Mckenzie Malecha, Early Ventures Teacher for 32 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 40 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 49. Joanna McLees, .619 FTE Long-Term Substitute Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, change to .78 FTE effective 9/14/2026-1/1/2027.
 50. Ellen Mucha, Retired Teacher at the High School, change to Transition Training Support for up to 9 hours effective 6/11/2026-8/13/2026.
 51. Katherine Norrie, Senior Class Advisor (1/3 stipend) at the High School, change to 1/2 stipend effective 8/27/2026.
 52. Kelli Rehbein, Early Ventures Teacher for 24 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 40 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 53. Correction: Andrea Robbins, ECSE Teacher at the NCEC, add Administrative Transition Planning for up to 4 hours effective 7/1/2026-6/30/2027. \$63.72/hr.
 54. Kyle Roth, ECSE Teacher at the NCEC, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 55. Lauren Sanders, ECSE Teacher at the NCEC, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 56. Angie Schewe, Early Ventures Teacher for up to 40 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 6 hrs/week effective 9/8/2026.
 57. Alexa Schmidt, Early Ventures Teacher for 22 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 40 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 58. Jade Suhsen, Early Ventures Teacher for up to 40 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 23.5 hrs/week effective 8/31/2026.
 59. Amanda Tracy, Senior Class Advisor (1/3 stipend) at the High School, change to 1/2 stipend effective 8/27/2026.
 60. Shane Trego, Special Education Teacher at the High School, add Co-Teaching Cohort Participant for 8 additional hours during the 2026-27 school year.
 61. Kaycee Welch, EA for 16 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 2.75 hrs/week effective 8/11/2026.
- iii. Leave of Absences
1. Anita Corwin, Early Ventures Site Assistant at the NCEC, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning 9/3/2026 and continuing through 11/13/2026.
 2. Jessica Nivala, Teacher at Greenvale Park, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning approximately 1/28/2027 and continuing through 6/11/2027.
- iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
1. Madison Anderson, Art Specialist at the ALC, resignation effective 8/5/2026.
 2. Stefany Perez Dorantes, Educational Assistant at Spring Creek, resignation effective 8/10/2026.
 3. Lauren Salmon, Educational Assistant at Greenvale Park, resignation effective 8/23/2026.

4. Sarah Swan McDonald, Senior Class Advisor at the High School, resignation effective 8/19/2026.

d. Financial Reports.

- i. Financial Reports - March 2026. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requests the board approve paid bills totaling \$3,417,002.63, payroll checks totaling \$3,790,314.34, a wire transfer totaling \$200,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$50,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for March 2026. No bond payments were made. At the end of March 2026, total cash and investments amounted to \$65,891,859.47.
- ii. Financial Reports - April 2026. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requests the board approve paid bills totaling \$3,635,189.18, payroll checks totaling \$3,753,265.94, a wire transfer totaling \$250,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$50,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for April 2026. No bond payments were made. At the end of April 2026, total cash and investments amounted to \$66,672,839.66.

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. N/A

8. Items for Information

- a. Construction Update No. 30. Superintendent Anderson provided an update on the NHS construction project.
- b. Staff Breakfast and Program. Northfield Public Schools will welcome back staff for the 2026-27 school year on Tuesday, September 1 from 7:30-10:00 a.m. at Northfield Middle School. The board is invited to join us.

9. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, September 14, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
 - b. Monday, September 28, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
 - c. Tuesday, October 13, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- *Note that Monday, October 12, 2026 is Indigenous Peoples' Day

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:52 p.m.

11. Work Session: Later School Start Times



Maggie Epstein
School Board Clerk