

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

October 13, 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, Gonzalez-George, Miller, Nelson, and Quinnell. Absent: Goerwitz. This meeting was open to the public, live-streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted on the school district website.
2. Land Acknowledgement Statement. DYC Co-Chair Max Beckman recited the land acknowledgement statement: “The Northfield School District recognizes that we reside on the homeland of the Wahpekute Tribe of the Dakota Nation. We acknowledge the wrongdoings, previous and ongoing, and strive to repair and strengthen our relations with Indigenous peoples.”
3. Agenda Approval/Table File
On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Nelson, the board unanimously approved the agenda.
4. Public Comment
There were no public comments.
5. Announcements and Recognitions
 - Greenvale Park Elementary fourth graders were selected to take part in the festivities of Governor Walz's pheasant opener weekend by participating in conservation stations hosted by the DNR this past Friday. The day featured hands-on learning activities focused on native plants, wildlife, and environmental stewardship.
 - The Greenvale Park PTO had a very successful fundraiser in September. One of the reward levels for students was planting trees for the school. In partnership with Tree Trust, 25 trees were planted around the school property. Classrooms named and planted a tree that students will now care for by watering. This was a collaborative effort, led by second grade teacher Danielle Amundson and the PTO leadership.
 - Congratulations to the Raider Girls' Tennis Team for securing their second straight team state tournament appearance after defeating Simley 4-3 last Friday. Northfield will represent Section 1AA at the team state tournament at the Life Time Bloomington South facility on Oct. 27-28. Individual sections are taking place tonight, Tuesday, October 13.
 - Superintendent Anderson provided activities highlights from the past week: The Raider volleyball team competed in the Milan Mader Volleyball tournament last week, with victories over John-Marshall High School, Albert Lea, Mayo High School, Moorhead and Prior Lake, and a 2-1 loss to Caledonia. The girls soccer team lost to both Byron and Owatonna and defeated Mankato West. They host sections tonight at 7:00 p.m. The boys soccer team defeated Mankato West last Tuesday and lost to Owatonna on Thursday. They hosted sections yesterday against Pine Island/Zumbrota-Mazeppa, finishing with a 3-2 win in overtime. They will now move on to the section semifinals and play Winona on Thursday night. The Raider football team lost to Owatonna last week, and hosts Rochester Century tomorrow. The girls swim and dive team finished second in the True Team Meet, but lost to Mankato West on Thursday. Both the girls and boys cross country teams competed in Owatonna last Thursday. The girls finished first out of 16 teams, and the boys finished 11th out of 15.
6. Items for Discussion and Reports
 - a. Special Services Presentation. Director of Special Services Caleb Davidson provided an update on the Minnesota Department of Education's comprehensive review of the district's special education program taking place during the 2026-2027 school year, and the district's revision of its Total Special Education System (TSES) plan. The TSES plan outlines how Northfield Public Schools identifies, evaluates, and serves students with disabilities and will be an item for individual action at the October 26, 2026 board meeting.
 - b. Superintendent's State of the District. Superintendent Anderson shared the State of the District presentation with the Northfield Chamber of Commerce on September 30, 2026. He reviewed that presentation with the

board.

- c. Policy Committee Recommendations. Superintendent Anderson presented the policy committee's recommended updates to policies 602, 603, 605, 607, 608, 609, 613, 709, and 722. This will be an item for individual action at the October 26, 2026 board meeting.

7. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on September 28, 2026.
- b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements included in the board packet.
- c. Financial Reports - July 2026. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf requested the board approve paid bills totaling \$3,642,792.73, payroll checks totaling \$3,857,901.53, bond payments in the amount of \$1,423,604.38, 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 July 2026. At the end of July 2026, total cash and investments amounted to \$73,212,239.26.
- d. Grant Application. Director of Community Education Erin Bailey and Early Childhood Coordinator Sara Line requested school board approval to apply for a grant to purchase a modular equipment system for the NCEC outdoor classroom for \$20,000 from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF). The outdoor classroom space is utilized by all programs at the NCEC, for special events that support families with young children, and by community partners like Growing Up Healthy.
- e. Personnel Items.
 - i. Appointments
 - 1. Kyla Lambert, Assistant Girls Lacrosse Coach at the High School beginning 4/5/2027. \$4,614 stipend.
 - 2. Quinn Hanzlik, Special Ed EA/PCA for 6.75 hrs/day at Spring Creek beginning 10/14/2026. Step 3 \$23.18/hr.
 - 3. Updated: Margot Nelson, Community School Site Assistant for up to 10 hrs/week at the Middle School/Bridgewater beginning 9/21/2026-5/13/2027. Step 2, \$19.95/hr.
 - 4. Updated: Jaden Brown, Special Education Assistant-PCA, 6.75 hrs/day, Spring Creek Beginning 10/19/2026 Step 1 \$22.30/hr.
 - 5. Ava Mahr, Substitute Building Nurse for the district, Beginning 10/19/2026, Step 1 ADN/RN \$38.53/hr.
 - 6. Melissa Edel, Substitute Building Nurse for the district, Beginning 10/19/2026, Step 1 ADN/RN \$38.53/hr.
 - ii. Increase/Decrease/Changes in Assignment
 - 1. Lynnsey Carlsen, Special Ed EA/PCA for 6.75 hrs/day at Bridgewater, change to 6.5 hrs/day effective 9/7/2026.
 - 2. Claire Edwards, EA at Spring Creek, add Community School Site Assistant for up to 5 hrs/week effective 10/7/2026-5/13/2027.
 - 3. Richard Erickson, EA at Bridgewater, add Event Worker at the Middle School effective 9/29/2026.
 - 4. Daniel Riesgraf, Teacher at the Middle School, add Event Worker at the Middle School effective 9/29/2026.
 - 5. Sarah Wolfe, ECFE EA for 17.25 hrs/wk at the NCEC, change to 18.75 hrs/wk effective 10/1/2026.
 - 6. Tami Wunderlich, Custodian at Greenvale Park, change to Bridgewater effective 10/19/2026.
 - iii. Leave of Absences
 - 1. Danielle Crase, Special Education Teacher at the High School, FMLA leave of absence beginning 9/16/2026 and continuing through 11/6/2026.
 - 2. Matthew Crase, Special Education Teacher at the High School, FMLA leave of absence beginning 9/16/2026 and continuing through 9/30/2026.
 - 3. Kelly Erickson, Head Custodian at Spring Creek, FMLA leave of absence beginning 9/16/2026 and continuing through 10/27/2026.
 - 4. Lydia Guthridge, Teacher at Greenvale Park, FMLA leave of absence beginning approximately 2/4/2027 and continuing through 5/26/2027.
 - 5. Anna Hawanchak, HR Generalist at the District Office, FMLA leave of absence beginning approximately 11/4/2026 and continuing through 3/24/2027.
 - 6. Jen Henriksen, Administrative Support Assistant at the Middle School, FMLA leave of absence beginning 7/7/2026 and continuing on an intermittent basis for up to 60 work days.
 - 7. Sara Redetzke, Educational Assistant at the Middle School, FMLA leave of absence beginning 9/16/2026 and continuing on an intermittent basis for up to 60 work days.
 - 8. Alexa Schmidt, Early Ventures Teacher at the NCEC, FMLA leave of absence beginning approximately 10/12/2026 and continuing through 2/12/2027.

iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations

1. Michael Allen, 6th Grade Football Coach at the Middle School, resignation effective 10/31/2026.
2. Updated: Jadzia Feimster, Custodian at Bridgewater, resignation effective 9/30/2026.
3. Heather Olson, Lunch Room EA at Greenvale Park, resignation effective 10/30/2026.
4. Isaac Wagner, Special Education EA at Bridgewater, resignation effective 10/9/2026.
5. Rose Taylor, Special Education EA at High School, resignation effective 10/29/2026.

*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 of School Board Supporting FORM A Application to Minnesota State High School League Foundation. On a motion by Nelson, seconded by Epstein, the board unanimously approved by roll call vote the Resolution of the School Board Supporting a FORM A Application to the Minnesota State High School League Foundation, which offsets student activity fees. Voting “yes” were: Butler, Epstein, Miller, Nelson, Quinnell, and Gonzalez-George. No one voted “no.”
- b. Resolution of School Board Supporting FORM B Application to Minnesota State High School League Foundation. On a motion by Epstein, seconded by Butler, the board unanimously approved the Resolution of the School Board Supporting a FORM B Application to the Minnesota State High School League Foundation by roll call vote. Voting “yes” were: Butler, Epstein, Miller, Nelson, Quinnell, and Gonzalez-George. No one voted “no.” The FORM B grant provides seminars/training opportunities or support for specific school functions for students/faculty members/officials and others who are involved in athletic and fine arts programs.

9. Items for Information

- a. Enrollment Report. Superintendent Anderson reviewed the October 2026 enrollment report.
- b. Construction Update No. 33. Superintendent Anderson provided an update on the NHS construction project.
- c. Retired Educators Luncheon. Board members are invited to attend the district’s annual retired educators luncheon on Friday, October 30. The luncheon will be held at Ruth’s on Stafford beginning at 11:30 a.m. If board members plan to attend, please RSVP to Kelly Spillman-Kramer no later than October 16.
- d. Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Presentation and Public Hearing. Instructional Services Director Jenn Reichel will summarize the 2026-2027 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan at a public hearing scheduled for 5:15 p.m. on Monday, November 9. This public hearing will precede the regular school board meeting.
- e. National School Lunch Week. National School Lunch Week is October 12-16, 2026. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) serves nearly 30 million children every school day. President John F. Kennedy created National School Lunch Week (NSLW) in 1962 to promote the importance of a healthy school lunch in a child’s life and the impact it has inside and outside of the classroom. We appreciate and thank all child nutrition staff in our district.
- f. National School Bus Safety Week. National School Bus Safety Week is October 19-23, 2026. School buses are the safest way for children to get to school. Their design is meant to be safer than any passenger vehicle in avoiding crashes and preventing injuries. Teaching children to follow safety rules on the bus is important, as is informing drivers about the laws regarding school buses. We appreciate and thank Benjamin Bus and their drivers for their continued support and partnership with Northfield Public Schools.

10. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, October 26, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, October 26, 2026, Following Regular Board Meeting, Board Work Session, Northfield DO Boardroom

- c. Monday, November 2, 2026, 5:15 p.m., Board Work Session, MSBA New Superintendent Workshop, Northfield DO Boardroom
- d. Monday, November 9, 2026, 5:15 p.m., Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Presentation and Public Hearing, Northfield DO Boardroom
- e. Monday, November 9, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- f. Monday, November 23, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Epstein, the board approved to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:27 p.m.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Maggie Epstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maggie Epstein
School Board Clerk