

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

November 8, 2021

District Office Boardroom

1. Call to Order

Board Chair Julie Pritchard called the Regular meeting of the Northfield Board of Education of Independent School District No. 659 to order at 7:00 p.m. Present: Baraniak, Butler, Gonzalez-George, Goerwitz, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. 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 Quinnell, seconded by Goerwitz, the board approved the agenda.

3. Public Comment

There was public comment.

4. Announcements and Recognitions

- National Community Education Day is Thursday, November 11, 2021 and we will celebrate this day at the Northfield Community Education Center.
- The Northfield High School Theatre Department presents “the Mystery of Edwin Drood” this coming weekend.
- The all-district band concert was held last week.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

a. Summary of Public Hearing Regarding the 2021-2022 World’s Best Workforce Plan

Director of Instructional Services Hope Langston summarized the 2021-22 World’s Best Workforce Plan and responded to questions from the board. There was no community feedback received at the World’s Best Workforce Plan public hearing that preceded the regular board meeting.

- b. Self-Funded Health Insurance Plan. Director of Human Resources Molly Viesselman updated the board on the district’s self-funded health insurance plan. Director Viesselman recapped the district’s history moving to the self-insurance model and the claims history 2019 to present. The revenue for our self-funded health is made up of premium revenue received from employees, the district and our retirees. For calendar year 2021 our premium revenue is expected to be \$7.3 million and our projected total expenditures is expected to be \$8.5 million. This significant spend down would put our fund balance under the goal the Benefits Advisory Committee has set.

The Benefits Advisory Committee in consultation with One Digital is recommending a 25% increase to the district’s health premium beginning January 1, 2022. The negotiated increase in the district contribution was 5%. This would leave the 480 employees with absorbing the remainder of the increase. A 25% increase will generate approximately \$1.8 million in additional premium revenue. It would be a minimum 73% increase in the out of pocket expense for participating employees depending on the plan. The pandemic has impacted every corner of our education system including our health plan. Healthcare institutions have taken significant losses, and we anticipate medical inflation increasing to catch up. As of September 30, we have incurred \$225,737 in COVID-19 specific expenditures.

Upon review, we feel strongly that we need to help ease this financial burden for our staff. Our district has prioritized stewardship and we have the financial capacity to support them. We are proposing for calendar year 2022 that instead of the 5% increase in district contribution, we restore the 80% district, 20% employee contribution ratio. This proposal will cost the district approximately \$1 million. We intend to use \$500,000 of ESSER III funds and \$500,000 of our unassigned general fund balance. For our highest utilized plan this would mean employees with family insurance would pay an increase of \$45 per paycheck rather than \$167, a

20% increase rather than a 72% increase. The district contribution would increase from 5% to 27%. The district is fortunate to be in a situation where we can be nimble in our response to support our staff. This is a short term solution and we will have to increase the premium again next year, but this will allow us time to be thoughtful about a longer term solution.

The board is asked to vote on this recommendation and this is an item for individual action at today's meeting.

- c. Policy Committee Recommendations. Superintendent Hillmann presented the policy committee's recommendations on policy 501. This will be an item for individual action at the next board meeting.
- d. Five-Year Strategic Plan. Superintendent Hillmann presented a first draft of the district's five-year strategic plan. The district has been soliciting feedback from stakeholders over the past six months. The district has held 15 meetings with staff, students, families and advisory groups, and has considered feedback from family and staff surveys. On November 18 the board will hold a five-year strategic plan work session.
- e. Superintendent Operations and COVID-19 Update. Dr. Hillmann provided an update about district operations and COVID-19. After seeing a decline in COVID cases, the county has reported an increase in the number of cases. Vaccination for students ages 5-11 has been approved by the FDA and CDC, and the district is hosting a vaccination clinic on November 18. The district's Cue COVID testing program is operational, and symptomatic district staff and students are eligible to make appointments to be tested. The BinaxNOW OTC at home tests arrived and we will begin to review this 'test to stay' option for staff and students, and we continue to offer the VAULT saliva tests.

Officer Bart Wiese will be shifting back to patrol responsibilities in Jan. 2022 and Officer Gabriel Crombie will be the new school resource officer.

Flexible grouping is currently being used with third grade students at Bridgewater and Spring Creek. This approach breaks students into more class sections than usual for reading. Early progress monitoring is showing gains at Bridgewater. The program has not been operating at Spring Creek long enough to conduct progress monitoring assessments.

6. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes
Minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on October 25, 2021
- b. Overnight Field Trips
 - i. Area Learning Center teachers Cheryl Mathison and Eric McDonald requested board approval for a co-curricular overnight trip for the 2021-2022 school year.
 - ii. Northfield High School Activities Director Joel Olson and Nordic Ski Team Head Coach Craig Cardinal requested board approval for an overnight trip for the 2021-22 school year.
- c. Personnel Items
 - i. Appointments
 - 1. Julie Borene, Event Worker as needed at the High School, beginning 11/16/2021.
 - 2. Kari Engle, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute Third Grade Teacher at Greenvale Park, beginning 3/14/2022-6/9/2022; Short Call Sub Rate
 - 3. Kari Engle, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute Second Grade Teacher at Bridgewater, beginning 11/2/2021-1/28/2022; Short Call Sub Rate
 - 4. Noelle Gilomen, Child Nutrition Associate I for 3.75 hours/day at the High School, beginning 10/27/2021; \$19.28/hr.

5. Correction: Debra Gottfried, Health Aide EA PCA for up to 7 hours/day on student contact days at the District Office, beginning 10/28/2021-6/9/2022; Step 4-\$17.52/hr.
6. Cindy Keogh, Building Supervisor with Community Education, beginning 11/6/2021; \$17.41/hr.
7. Cindy Keogh, Site Supervisor/Scheduler with Community Education Recreation, beginning 11/3/2021-5/31/2022; \$12.64/hr.
8. Steven Knutson, Building Supervisor with Community Education, beginning 11/6/2021; \$17.41/hr.
9. Tricia Lancaster, Building Supervisor with Community Education, beginning 11/6/2021; \$17.41/hr.
10. Anthony Mathison, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute Physical Education Teacher at Bridgewater, beginning on or about 12/3/2021-2/25/2022; MA, Step 10
11. Thomas Neuger, Site Supervisor/Scheduler with Community Education Recreation, beginning 11/3/2021-5/31/2021; \$11.39/hr.
12. Mason Nystuen, Targeted Services Student Site Assistant for up to 2 hours/day Mon.-Thurs. at Bridgewater, beginning 11/2/2021-4/28/2022; \$10.08/hr.
13. Timothy Pollreis, 1.0 FTE Night Custodian at the NCEC, beginning 11/8/2021; Step 1-\$18.38/hr.
14. Nicholas Sasse, Targeted Services PLUS Student Site Assistant for up to 1.75 hours/day Mon.-Thurs. at Spring Creek, beginning 11/2/2021-4/28/2022; \$10.08/hr.
15. Ryan Sweeney, 1.0 FTE Technology Specialist with the District, beginning 11/15/2021; Step 4-prorated for the 2021-22 school year.
16. Correction: Johanna Villa, .5 Assistant Dance Team Coach for 2 hours/day for 3 days/week at the High School, beginning 10/25/2021; Level 2, Step 5.
17. Cortney Gillum, 1.0 FTE Building Nurse at Greenvale Park, beginning 1/4/2022; Step 4-\$36.84/hr.
18. Change: Candace Hard, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute Special Ed Teacher-ABS, LD, EBD at Bridgewater, beginning on 11/12/2021-2/11/2022; BA10, Step 10
19. Grant Hutton, Program Assistant with Community Education Recreation, beginning 11/7/2021-5/31/2022; \$10.50/hr.
20. Michelle Oaxaca, Special Ed EA-PCA for 6.75 hours/day at the High School, beginning 11/11/2021; Step 4-\$17.52/hr.
21. Ryan Oden, ELL EA for 7 hours/day at the Middle School, beginning 11/22/2021-6/10/2021; Step 3-\$16.29/hr.
22. Tony Rezac, Head Wrestling Coach for 2 hours/day at the Middle School, beginning 11/15/2021; Stipend \$2,987 + step 4-\$125.00
23. Nathan Stevens, Program Assistant with Community Education Recreation, beginning 11/7/2021-5/31/2022; \$10.08/hr.

ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment

1. Nives Bakic, Special Ed EA at the Middle School, add Special Ed EA PCA Extracurricular and non-academic activities as needed with the District, effective 9/30/2021-6/10/2022.
2. Adriana Bermudez, ECFE EA for 11.75 hours/week at the NCEC, add Health Aide EA PCA for 35.25 hours/week at the NCEC, effective 9/27/2021-6/9/2022.
3. Adriana Bermudez, ECFE EA/Health Aide for 16.25 hours/week at the NCEC, change to ECFE EA for 15.5 hours/week at the NCEC, effective 10/28/2021.
4. Josten Coleman, Teacher at the Middle School, add Head Softball Coach at the High School, effective 3/14/2022; Level \$6,970 Step 3
5. Lindsey Davis, 1.0 Assistant Dance Team Coach at the High School, change to .5 Assistant Dance Team Coach at the High School, effective 10/28/2021.
6. Tyler Faust, Football Coach at the Middle School, change to Assistant Football Coach at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2022.
7. LeAnne Fricke, Head Gymnastics Coach at the High School, change to Assistant Gymnastics Coach at the High School, effective 11/8/2021; Level 2, Step 10
8. Denise Halvorson, Head Speech Coach at the Middle School, change to 50% Head Speech Coach and 50% Assistant Speech Coach, at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.
9. Mary Harrity-Davidson, Assistant Girls Tennis Coach at the Middle School, change to 50% Head Girls Tennis Coach and 50% Assistant Girls Tennis Coach, at the Middle School, effective 9/1/2021.
10. Leslie Hayden, Football Coach at the Middle School, change to Assistant Football Coach at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.
11. Kelly Hebzynski, Assistant Speech Coach at the Middle School, change to 50% Head Speech Coach and 50% Assistant Speech Coach, at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.
12. Zoe Ingersoll, Assistant Gymnastics Coach at the High School, change to Head Gymnastics Coach at the High School, effective 11/8/2021; Level 1, Step 2
13. Chris Jackson, Football Coach at the Middle School, change to Assistant Football Coach at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.

14. Melanie Klein, Special Ed Teacher at Spring Creek, add Homebound Teacher with the District, effective 10/27/2021-6/10/2022.
 15. Angela Lynch, .40 Sped ALC; .50 Sped High School; .10 Vision Impaired DW, change to .25 Social Studies ALC, .25 English, ALC, .50 Vision impaired DW, effective 8/30/2021-6/9/2022
 16. Tony Mathison, Football Coach at the Middle School, change to Head Football Coach at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.
 17. Pete Maus, Football Coach at the Middle School, change to Head Football Coach at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.
 18. Curt Mikkelson, Football Coach at the Middle School, change to Head Football Coach at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.
 19. Sean O'Brien, Football Coach at the Middle School, change to Assistant Football Coach at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.
 20. Jacob Odell, Head Girls Tennis Coach at the Middle School, change to 50% Head Girls Tennis Coach and 50% Assistant Girls Tennis Coach, at the Middle School, effective 9/1/2021.
 21. Nathan Porath, .3 Nordic Assistant Coach at the High School, change to .5 Nordic Assistant Coach at the High School, effective 11/15/2021.
 22. Brent Rauk, Football Coach at the Middle School, change to Head Football Coach at the Middle School, effective 10/29/2021.
 23. Katie Remmey, Special Ed EA at the Middle School, add Special Ed EA PCA Extracurricular and non-academic activities as needed with the District, effective 9/30/2021-6/10/2022.
 24. Alexis Sanborn, Special Ed EA PCA at the High School, Special Ed EA PCA Bus for an additional 1.33 hrs/week with the District, effective 10/29/2021-6/10/2022.
 25. Anita Sasse, Teacher at Spring Creek, add Targeted Services PLUS Teacher for up to 6 hours/week Mon.-Thurs. at Spring Creek, effective 11/1/2021-4/29/2022. Year 1-\$27.11/hr.
 26. Angela Schock, Teacher at the Middle School, add Homebound Teacher with the District, effective 10/27/2021-6/10/2022.
 27. Heather Stanton-Ims, Social Worker at the Middle School, add Targeted Services BLAST Teacher for up to 6 hours/week Mon.-Thurs. at the Middle School, effective 11/1/2021-5/12/2022. Year 1-\$27.11/hr.
 28. Shelley Stulken, Teacher at Spring Creek, add Targeted Services PLUS Teacher for up to 6 hours/week Mon.-Thurs. at Spring Creek, effective 11/1/2021-4/29/2022. Year 1-\$27.11/hr.
 29. Joquan Williams, KidVentures Site Assistant at Greenvale Park, add Community School Club Leader for up to 8 hours/week at Greenvale Park, effective 10/2/2021-6/3/2022; \$23.01/hr.
 30. Mark Johnson, Seasonal Grounds with the District, change to Substitute Custodian with the District for snow plowing purposes, effective 11/4/2021.
 31. Debra Pack, Special Ed EA at the High School, add Special Ed EA PCA Bus morning route for 1.42 hrs/day with the District, effective 10/29/2021-6/10/2022.
 32. Sheldon Volkert, .5 Assistant Gymnastics Coach at the High School, change to .3 Assistant Gymnastics Coach at the High School, effective 11/8/2021.
- iii. Leave of Absence
1. Natalie Amy, Counselor at the Middle School, Family/Medical Leave of Absence, beginning on or about 4/14/2022 through the 2021-2022 school year.
 2. Kay Goodrich, EA at the Middle School, Family/Medical Leave of Absence, beginning 11/3/2021-1/17/2022.
 3. Brent Lothert, Assistant Network Manager with the District, Family/Medical Leave of Absence, beginning on or about 11/25/2021 for 12 work days.
- iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
1. Karl Viesselman, Girls Head Track Coach at the High School, resignation effective 11/5/2021.
- d. Grant Application Approvals
- i. Director of Child Nutrition Stephany Stromme requested school board approval of a \$16,000.00 grant from MN Department of Agriculture. The AGRI Full Tray Farm to School program will enhance our farm to school offerings and assist us in being proactive in purchasing equipment so production is not disrupted with repair downtimes. The grant request is for \$5,000 for Full Tray Grant to support farm to school purchases and \$11,000 equipment request to purchase a counter top freezer for both the middle school and high school to offer frozen ala carte items that meet Smart Snack guidelines, as well as a steamer or combi oven at the high school.
 - ii. Director Community Education Erin Bailey requested school board approval of a \$20,000.00 grant request from Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation. This grant funding will be used to provide

wrap-around childcare for students enrolled in the full day Hand in Hand Preschool section who are receiving free or reduced price lunch. This childcare will be offered from 7:30 a.m. to the start of preschool and from 3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. This will allow families to have a complete day of care for their child. Early Ventures Learning Center is at capacity and thus not able to provide this service. If received, this grant will provide funding February 8, 2022 - February 8, 2023.

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. World's Best Workforce 2021-2022 Annual Report. On a motion by Gonzalez-George, seconded by Baraniak, the board approved the 2021-2022 World's Best Workforce Annual Report as presented.
- b. Co-Curricular Adds or Reductions. On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Gonzalez-George, the board approved the Middle School Assistant Student Council Advisor, Level 4, stipend of \$1,991.00.
- c. Resolution of School Board Supporting FORM A Application to Minnesota State High School League Foundation. On a motion by Baraniak, seconded by Butler, the board approved the Resolution of School Board Supporting FORM A Application to Minnesota State High School League Foundation. On a roll call vote, voting 'yes' was Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.
- d. Resolution Establishing Combined Polling Places for Multiple Precincts and Designating Hours During Which the Polling Places Will Remain Open for Voting for School District Elections Not Held on the Day of a Statewide Election. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Baraniak, the board approved the Resolution Establishing Combined Polling Places for Multiple Precincts and Designating Hours During Which the Polling Places Will Remain Open for Voting for School District Elections Not Held on the Day of a Statewide Election. On a roll call vote, voting 'yes' was Baraniak, Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Pritchard, Quinnell and Stratmoen. No one voted 'no'.
- e. One-Time Increase to District's Contribution to Employee Health Insurance. On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Goerwitz, the board approved assigning \$500,000 of ESSER-III funds and \$500,000 of the district's unassigned fund balance to limit the impact of the 25% increase to the health insurance premiums on employees for the 2022 plan year.

8. Items for Information

- a. Enrollment Report. Superintendent Hillmann reviewed the November 2021 enrollment report.
- b. American Education Week. American Education Week presents everyone with an opportunity to celebrate public education and honor individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every student receives a quality education. American Education Week is November 15-19, 2021.
- c. Northfield Middle School Roof Replacement Process. Director of Finance Mertesdorf previewed the process for using long term facilities maintenance revenue to pay bond costs associated with replacing the Northfield Middle School roof.

9. Future Meetings

- a. Thursday, November 18, 2021, 5:00 p.m., Board Work Session, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, November 22, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- c. Monday, December 13, 2021, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Baraniak, the board adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Noel Stratmoen
School Board Clerk