

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

December 9, 2024
District Office Boardroom

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 6:04 p.m. Present: Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, Hardy, Miller, Nelson and Quinnell. 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 Hardy, the board unanimously approved the agenda.
3. Public Comment
There was one public comment.
4. Announcements and Recognitions
 - Noel and Lois Stratmoen were honored for Noel's time on the school board. Northfield Public Schools declared December 10, 2024 "Noel and Lois Stratmoen Day" in the Northfield School District.
 - The Sesquicentennial Minute: The superintendent highlighted an excerpt from Bruce Colwell's "City of Schools" book about the history of the school district.
 - Amy Goerwitz announced that Northfield High School theatre director Bob Gregory-Bjorklund was selected for the City of Northfield's Living Treasure Award, recognizing his contributions to arts and culture in the city.
5. Items for Discussion and Reports
 - a. Truth in Taxation Presentation for the Payable 2025 Property Tax Levy and Fiscal Year 2024-2025 General Fund Budget Revision Followed by Public Comment. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf reviewed the levy and recommended revisions to the 2024-25 general fund budget. The final certified levy for 2025 is \$27,740,323.16, representing a 26.4% increase from the prior year. The increase from the preliminary levy to the final levy includes the initial debt payment for the Reimagine NHS bond. The general fund budget revision accounts for legislative impacts, final audited data, settled contracts, and benefits.
 - b. FY2024 Audit Results and Presentation. Ben Johnson with CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, presented the results of the 2023-24 fiscal year audit. The Northfield School District received a clean audit for the 6th year in a row.
 - c. 2024-25 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) Goals. Director of Instructional Services Hope Langston presented the 2024-2025 CACR goals.
 - d. Policy Committee Recommendations. Superintendent Hillmann presented the policy committee's recommended updates to policies 103, 401, 402, 403, 404, and 405. This will be an item for individual action at the next board meeting.
 - e. 2024-25 Superintendent Focus Area Update No. 1. Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on his 2024-25 focus areas.
 - f. Construction Update No. 2. Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on the NHS construction project.
6. Consent Agenda
On a motion by Butler, seconded by Miller, the board unanimously approved the consent agenda.
 - a. Minutes. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on November 25, 2024.
 - b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements attached.
 - c. Personnel Items.

- i. Appointments
 1. Jennifer Antoine, Special Ed EA PCA for 33.5 hours/week at the NCEC, beginning 12/9/2024-6/6/2025. Step 4-\$18.05/hr.+ prorated PCA stipend. - subject to change upon settlement of 2024-26 agreement.
 2. Lily Becker, KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 11 hours/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 12/4/2024. Step 1-\$17.80/hr.
 3. Jayden Garcia Ramirez, Child Nutrition Associate I for 3.25 hours/day at Spring Creek, beginning 1/2/2025. \$2192/hr.
 4. Reed Hagberg, Softball/Basketball Official with Community Education Recreation, beginning 11/10/2024-5/31/2025. \$30/game
 5. Deborah Wagner, Special Ed EA PCA for 7 hours/day at Bridgewater, beginning 12/6/2024. Step 4-\$18.05/hr.+ prorated PCA stipend. - subject to change upon settlement of 2024-26 agreement.
 6. Jamison Baker, KidVentures Student Site Assistant for up to 15 hours/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 12/9/2024. Student Step 1-\$15.66/hr.
 7. William Baragary, Instructor Lead with Community Ed Recreation, beginning 12/14/2024 - 5/31/2025. Step 2 -\$15.80/hr.
 8. Hezekiah Ben Shirnai, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute Science Teacher at the High School, beginning 1/21/2025-6/6/2025. MA, Step 1
 9. William Dunker, Assistant Baseball Coach at the High School, beginning 3/17/2025. \$5,544 stipend.
 10. Updated: Elizabeth Johnson, Community School Club Leader for up to 15 hours/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 12/9/2024-5/15/2025. \$25.53/hr.
 11. Mark Johnson, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute Phy Ed Teacher at Greenvale Park, beginning 2/24/2025-3/21/2025. Daily Sub Rate.
 12. Deborah Wagner, Event Worker at the High School, beginning 01/01/2025. \$45/\$77 per event.
- ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment
 1. Molly Andrews, Special Ed EA Child Specific for 6.75 hours/day at the Middle School, change to Special Ed EA Resource Room EBD for 6.75 hours/day at the Middle School, effective 12/2/2024.
 2. Correction: Jennifer Bowens, Special Ed EA for 6.5 hours/day and Supervisory for .50 hours/day at the High School, change to 1.0 FTE Special Ed Teacher at Spring Creek, effective 12/9/2024-6/6/2024. MA+30, Step 7
 3. Nancy Fox, Teacher at Spring Creek, add Site Supervisor with Community Ed Recreation, effective 11/27/2024-5/31/2025. Step 6-\$17.87/hr.
 4. Claire Gardner, Teacher at the Middle School, add Speech Coach at the Middle School, effective 12/1/2024. \$2,772 stipend.
 5. Christina Smith-Lee, Special Ed EA for 7 hours/day at Bridgewater, change to Special Ed EA for 4.20 hours/day at the Middle School, effective 12/2/2024.
 6. William Baragery, Instructor Lead with Community Ed Recreation, add Instructor Assistant Step 2-\$14.76/hr, Lifeguard Step 2-\$14.76/hr. and WSI Step 1-\$16.58/hr. with Community Ed Recreation, effective 12/14/2024-5/31/2025.
 7. Vicky Chlan, Teacher at the High School, add Ski Club Chaperone with Community Ed Recreation, effective 1/6/2025-5/31/2025. \$500 stipend
 8. Deborah Wagner, Event Worker at the High School, add Building Supervisor with Community Ed Recreation, effective 12/15/2024. \$19.32/hr.
- iii. Leave of Absence
 1. Julie Erickson, Early Venture Teacher at NCEC, FMLA leave of absence beginning 12/10/2024 - 12/16/2024.
 2. Teresa Findlay, Educational Assistant at the Middle School, Leave of Absence beginning 1/2/2025 for 6 work weeks.
 3. Amber Soderlund, Teacher at Spring Creek, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning on or about 3/25/2025 through the end of the 2024-2025 school year.
 4. Taylor Choudek, Early Childhood Teacher at NCEC, childcare leave of absence beginning on or about 3/10/2025 through the end of the 2024-2025 school year.
 5. Updated: Michele Knutson, Guidance Office Administrative Assistant at the High School, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning 12/18/2024-1/29/2025.
- iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
 1. Lorraine Linehan, Child Nutrition Associate I at the Middle School, resignation effective 12/13/2024. Will continue as a substitute with Child Nutrition.
 2. Christina Smith-Lee, Special Ed EA at the Middle School, resignation effective 12/19/2024.
 3. Jamie Stanley, Special Ed EA at the High School, declined position effective 11/29/2024. Will continue as a substitute EA.
 4. Heidi Melnychuk, EA at the High School, resignation effective 12/20/2024.
- v. Seniority Lists

The board approved the 2024-2025 Principal/Assistant Principals Seniority List and the 2024-2025 Teacher Seniority List.

vi. Substitute Pay Schedule

The board approved the updated substitute pay schedule as presented.

- d. Overnight Field Trip Northfield High School Band and Choir. Northfield High School Band Director Nahal Javan & Choir Director Kyle Eastman received board approval to take high school band and choir students to Minneapolis/St. Paul/Bloomington, MN, April 17-18, 2025.
- e. Overnight Trip Northfield Varsity Wrestling Team. Northfield High School Wrestling Coach Geoff Staab received board approval to take the varsity wrestling team to Rochester, MN to wrestle in a competitive individual wrestling tournament, December 19-21, 2024.

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. Certify Final 2024 Payable 2025 Tax Levy. On a motion by Gonzalez-George, seconded by Butler, the board unanimously certified to county auditors the 2024 Payable 2025 Final Certified Levy Limitation and Certification Report in the amount of \$27,740,323.16 which represents a 26.4% increase from the prior year. This action completes the school district's process that began in September with the preliminary levy certification to Rice, Dakota, and Goodhue counties and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). The district reviewed and analyzed MDE's calculation and the school district's property tax base estimate by Rice, Dakota, and Goodhue counties. This levy, payable in 2025, will be a component of the 2025-26 fiscal budget.
- b. Fiscal Year 2024-2025 General Fund Budget Revision. On a motion by Miller, seconded by Hardy, the board unanimously approved the revised 2024-25 general fund budget with revenues of \$67,749,122 and expenditures of \$68,341,666. The adopted general fund revenue and expenditure budget for FY24 was \$67,744,818 and \$66,853,904 respectively. The major factors contributing to these changes include the final audited data from FY24, updated enrollment estimates, finalized employment agreements, benefits, and transportation.

8. Items for Information

- a. Enrollment Report. Superintendent Hillmann reviewed the December 2024 enrollment report.
- b. Dec. 2 District Committee Meeting Recap. Superintendent Hillmann shared a recap of the district committee meetings held on Dec. 2. Individual committee reports will be shared in January.

9. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, January 13, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Organizational Board Meeting followed by the Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, January 27, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Hardy, the board unanimously approved to adjourn the regular board meeting at 8:36 p.m.



Amy Goerwitz
School Board Clerk