

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent
Memorandum

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Matt Hillmann Ed.D., Superintendent
RE: Table File Items for September 27, 2021, Regular School Board Meeting

5. Items for Discussion and Reports
 - b. Superintendent State of the District Overview. Dr. Hillmann's State of the District Overview is attached in the table file.

6. Consent Agenda
 - d. Personnel Items
 - i. Appointments
 11. Anthony Amys-Roe, Program Assistant with Community Education Recreation, beginning 10/2/2021-5/31/2022; \$10.50/hr.
 12. Helen Dillon, Fall Play Costumer with the High School beginning 9/27/2021;\$14.00/hr.
 13. Daniel Kallman, Fall Play at the High School beginning 9/30/2021; \$14.00hr.
 14. Samantha Massie, Program Supervisor with Community Education Recreation, beginning 10/9/2021-5/31/2022; \$10.89/hr.
 15. Jane Moore, Fall Play Accompanist at the High School beginning 9/27/2021; \$15.00/hr.
 16. Jessica Provancha, American Sign Language Interpreter EC for 1.5 hours/week at the NCEC, beginning 10/1/2021; Level C - \$26.24/hr.
 17. Coral Ramos, Community School Site Assistant for up to 3 hours/day for 2 days/week at Greenvale Park, beginning 9/28/2021-6/3/2022; Step 4-\$15.48/hr.
 - ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment
 35. Karen Lane, Grade 3 Teacher at Bridgewater, change to Small Group Teacher at Bridgewater, effective 8/30/2021-6/9/2022.
 36. Elena Mayrhofer, Special Ed EA for 7 hours/day and Gen Ed EA for .25 hours/day at Spring Creek, change to Special Ed EA for 6.75 hours/day at Spring Creek, effective 9/20/2021-6/10/2022.
 37. Eric Swan McDonald, Teacher at the ALC, add Secondary Portage Content Tutor, effective 9/23/2021-6/8/2022; Stipend \$10,500/year.
 - iii. Leave of Absence

None
 - iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
 1. John (Hal) Eckhart, Custodian at the NCEC, retirement effective 11/5/2021.
 2. Lacy Knutson, Special Ed EA at the Middle School, declined position effective 9/26/2021.
 3. Claire Little, Assistant Alpine Coach at the High School, resignation effective 9/23/2021.
 - e. Grant Proposal. Superintendent Hillmann is requesting board approval of a \$297,500.00 grant request from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) from December 1, 2021 - November 30, 2026. The Northfield Teaching Fellows initiative will support 17 local individuals of color in successfully completing a PELSB-approved teaching program, positioning them for careers in teaching. Fellows will receive tuition assistance and an annual stipend. They will also be paired with a current Northfield Public Schools teacher, who will serve as an ongoing mentor for them throughout the program. Moreover, each Fellow will meet every other week with a program Navigator, who will provide: academic advising; financial aid assistance; connections with tutors; and linkages with social service and community resources. The Northfield Community College Collaborative will offer space for Fellows to come in the evenings and weekends to study, receive tutoring, print, access the internet, and connect with peers. All recipients will reside in the geographic boundaries of the Northfield Public Schools, thereby positioning them to hopefully choose to remain in the community following completion of the program. All individuals of color, the 17 Fellows will include representation from each of the following groups: Northfield graduates, parents of current

Northfield Public Schools students, current Northfield Public Schools non-teaching staff, and community members.

7. Items for Individual Action

- b. Proposed 2021 Payable 2022 Property Tax Levy. Attached is the tax comparison payable 2021 to 2022.

The presentation begins with reviewing the district's vision and then organizes successes and challenges around our five strategic commitment areas: people, learner outcomes, stewardship, partnerships, and equity.

Northfield School District Vision: We will prepare every student for lifelong success within a world-class learning environment with a commitment to community partnerships and sustainability.

Strategic Commitment - People: School districts are a human enterprise. We are committed to caring for the people we serve: our district students, families, and staff.

Successes

- COVID-19 response: the coronavirus presented many challenges as well as opportunities to learn. The district was required to make difficult decisions with urgency. While agreement wasn't universal, the district acted decisively based on data and other relevant information available at the time with the community's overall health as a driving factor.
- Communication: The district's communication was never more vital to the operation of the system. Clear, concise, and timely communication was essential. Parents gave the district high marks for its communication throughout the school year.
- Events: The district was able to hold many events that we may not have thought possible. Athletics, theatre, Rock n' Roll Revival, and an in-person graduation led the list of events that could take place despite the pandemic.
- Northfield Education Association Contract: We are proud to have already settled a new two-year agreement with the NEA. The new contract provides a modest increase in wages and modernized employee leave.

Challenges

- COVID-19 response: the district's COVID-19 response is more complicated in many ways in 2021-22 than it was in 2020-21. The lack of statewide direction requires each district to make its own decisions, creating a patchwork of approaches from district-to-district that can be confusing to families.
- Fatigue/Mental Health: This mass disruption event has caused challenges for so many in our society. The fatigue caused by the pandemic, political polarization, and issues related to racial justice have impacted our community's mental health.
- Re-engagement: Some people need to re-learn how to engage in public after 18 months of pandemic-related restrictions. This reentry into society can be difficult and schools are no different.

Strategic Commitment - Learner Outcomes: As a school district, we focus on high-quality results for our students as academic and social/emotional beings. Our goal is to prepare them for lifelong success.

Successes

- Ready for K: One of the district's key strategies to eliminate the achievement/opportunity gap is high-quality early learning. As shared during the Northfield Community Education school improvement plan presentation, 100% of children who attended Early Ventures were prepared for Kindergarten at the start of the 2020-21 school year.
- Elementary science. As shared at our last school board meeting, the district made a significant shift in elementary science instruction in 2020-21. An evidence-based, hands-on approach to learning maintained MCA science performance despite a new curriculum and an unusual year that included a mix of in-person and distance learning.
- New skills: students learned many new skills during the pandemic that prepare them for the workforce. The independence needed to engage in remote work and solving problems presented by the pandemic's ubiquitous disruptions are skills that may not have been able to be learned in other ways.

Challenges

- Academic acceleration. There are many needs to help students recover from the challenges associated with the unusual 2020-21 school year. Efforts such as addressing elementary class sizes, adding guidance counselors, other mental health supports, and changing the way we look at summer school are just some of the ways we are addressing these challenges.
- Perception of loss. While there was disruption, learning during the pandemic has often been characterized by "loss" vs. the experiences and non-traditional learning that will shape the rest of our students' lives. These experiences are mostly immeasurable but may have a significant impact.

Strategic Commitment - Stewardship: The district is committed to using our human and financial resources wisely.

Successes

- Financial stability despite uncertainty. The years of quality fiscal management provided the district with a foundation to address the financial uncertainties of the pandemic.
- Use of federal funds. The district is using some federal funds to immediately support programming. It has also reserved a significant portion for addressing additional unanticipated expenses and providing greater budget stability.
- Xcel Energy Renewable Connect. The district has continued with the Xcel Energy renewable connect program. This program provides 100% of the district's electricity each day from renewable resources while not burdening us with equipment and operational upkeep.

Challenges

- State funding. The district is grateful for the investment the state Legislature made in PreK-12 education in the 2021 session. However, this session's increases to the state funding formula do not make up for decades of chronic underfunding compared to inflation.
- Five-year priority-based budget. The district will embark on a five-year priority-based budget process this winter. Establishing priorities through strategic planning and funding them through a community-based budgeting process will be challenging but set the stage for a successful five-year budget cycle.

Strategic Commitment - Partnerships: Northfield is a community that supports education. In addition to the generous taxpayer support, partnerships are just as critical. We are grateful for the community support.

Successes

- Northfield Promise: The partnerships with Northfield Promise and the Northfield Healthy Community Initiative continue to yield results for students. Northfield Promise's financial and volunteer support for ensuring every student had a satisfactory internet connection during the pandemic was critical. The collective effort to support literacy in our community earned Northfield a "bright spot" designation from the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading.
- Northfield Hospital+Clinics: The partnership between the district and NH+C has shined during the pandemic. Whether it was data and counsel on district safety measures, physicians sharing information via district webinars, or NH+C's prioritization of educators for vaccination, the collaboration between our two organizations has never been stronger.
- Rice County Public Health: The district valued Rice County Public Health's support. They supported us with weekly phone calls, serving as part of the incident command team, and analyzing local data to support our decision-making.

Challenges

- Bringing volunteers back as safely as practicable: while many things are getting closer to "regular," being thoughtful about re-engaging volunteers will be an opportunity. The district is requiring volunteers to be vaccinated to protect the school community and our volunteers. We look forward to leveraging the fantastic human capital that Northfield possesses.

Strategic Commitment - Equity: The district aspires to prepare every child for lifelong success, that each person feels valued, and that a world-class learning environment is anti-racist.

Successes

- Anti-racism framework: The district developed and implemented an anti-racism framework focused on three areas: symbolism, individual behavior, and systemic behavior.
- Continued staff training: The district continued a multi-year effort to provide training for staff related to racial equity. Monthly professional learning community discussions were centered on these topics.
- Community coalition: The district, the City of Northfield, and the Northfield Healthy Community Initiative have been founding partners of the Northfield Racial and Ethnic Equity Coalition. This coalition brings together many segments of the community to make Northfield a welcoming place for everyone. It also interfaces with other community groups focused on anti-racism and equity.

Challenges

- Maintaining momentum: The district's equity work will take a sustained effort. In education, there are consistently new areas identified for improvement. Maintaining momentum is often a challenge in all areas of continuous improvement.

- Misinformation: Unfortunately, misinformation (and disinformation) has been spread throughout the country about anti-racism and equity-related work. Continuing to communicate the “why” behind this effort will be crucial in gaining breakthroughs in the district’s achievement and opportunity gaps.

State of the District

2021-22

Matt Hillmann, Ed.D. | Superintendent

Our Vision

We will prepare every student for lifelong success within a world-class learning environment with a commitment to community partnerships and sustainability.

Strategic Commitments



People



Learner
Outcomes



Stewardship



Partnerships



Equity



People

Successes

- COVID response
- Communication
- Events
- NEA Contract

Challenges

- COVID response
- Fatigue/Mental Health
- Re-engagement



Learner Outcomes

Successes

- Ready for K
- Elementary science
- New skills

Challenges

- Academic acceleration
- Perception of loss



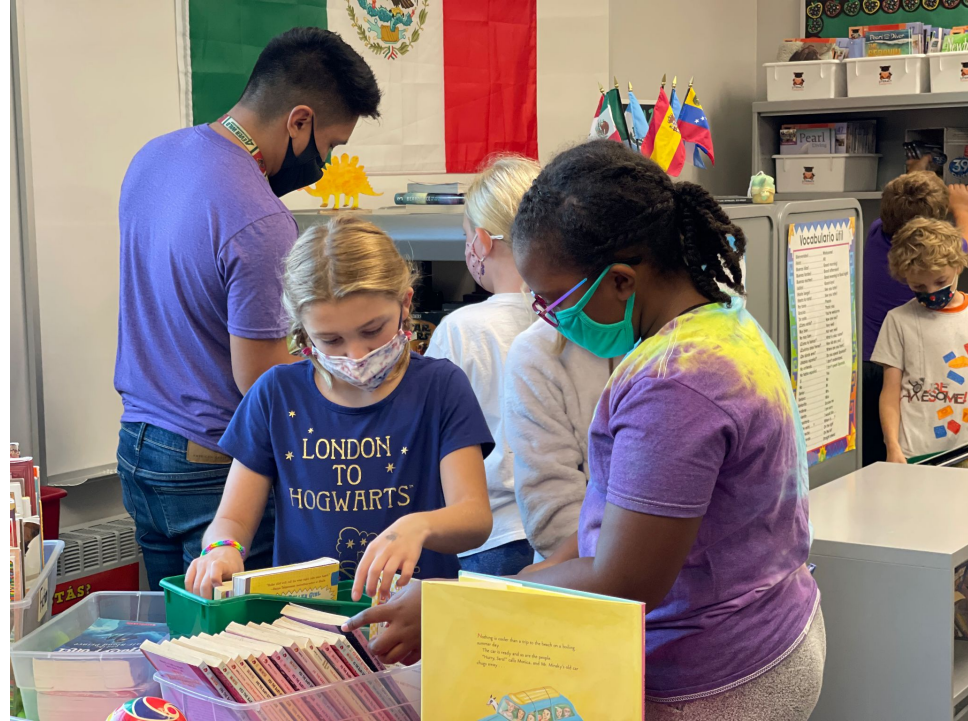
Stewardship

Successes

- Financial stability despite uncertainty
- Use of federal funds
- Xcel Energy Renewable Connect

Challenges

- State funding
- Five-year priority-based budget



Partnerships

Successes

- Northfield Promise
- NH+C
- Rice County Public Health

Challenges

- Bringing volunteers back as safely as practicable



Equity

Successes

- Anti-racism framework
- Continued training for staff
- Community coalition

Challenges

- Maintaining momentum
- Misinformation



Achievements

Statewide Recognition

- Anita Aase (MSOPA)
- Nancy Antoine (MESPA)

Local Recognition

- Teresa Findley (EA of the Year)
- Heather Olivier (Teacher of the Year)

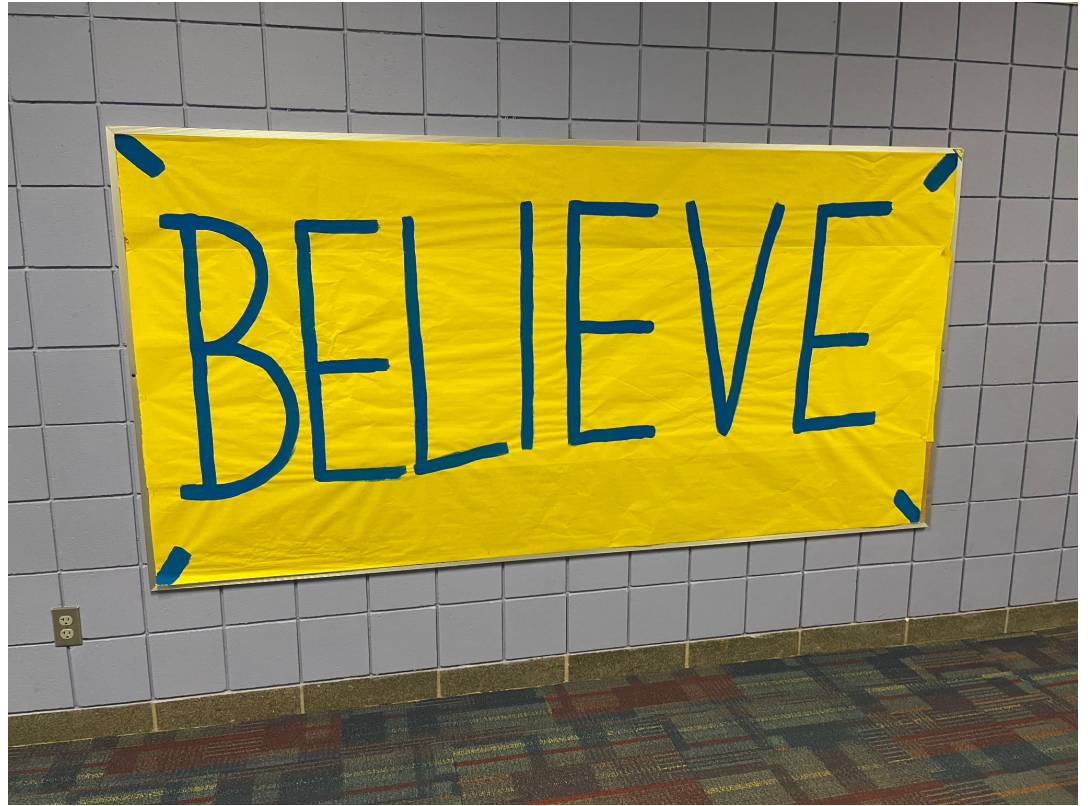
State Champions

- Knowledge Bowl
- Bowling
- Nate Stevens (golf)

National Recognition

- Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Bright Spot Community

» **Forward**
continuous improvement



Grant Application Approval Form

Date: September 25, 2021

Any proposal submitted to an external funding source that involves any entity within the Northfield Public Schools must be approved by the School Board before the proposal is submitted. This form will accompany all requests to the School Board and will be filed along with a copy of the completed grant proposal. All proposals must:

- Support the District's mission and goals.
- Be financially feasible and supported by all affected District departments or buildings.
- Demonstrate collaboration and commitment from the District, if required.

Grant Proposal Information	
Project Title	Northfield Teaching Fellows
Project Period	From: December 1, 2021 To: November 30, 2026
Funding Source	Minnesota Department of Education
Application Deadline	October 1, 2021
List all Grant Applicants	Northfield Public Schools (district required to be applicant, per MDE guidelines)
School/Department	District Office
Contact Person	Matt Hillmann Phone No. 507.663.0629
Project Information	
Brief Proposal Description	<p>The Northfield Teaching Fellows initiative will support 17 local individuals of color in successfully completing a PELSB-approved teaching program, positioning them for careers in teaching. Fellows will receive tuition assistance and an annual stipend. They will also be paired with a current Northfield Public Schools teacher, who will serve as an ongoing mentor for them throughout the program. Moreover, each Fellow will meet every other week with a program Navigator, who will provide: academic advising; financial aid assistance; connections with tutors; and linkages with social service and community resources. The Northfield Community College Collaborative will offer space for Fellows to come in the evenings and weekends to study, receive tutoring, print, access the internet, and connect with peers.</p> <p>All recipients will reside in the geographic boundaries of the Northfield Public Schools, thereby positioning them to hopefully choose to remain in the community following completion of the program.</p> <p>All individuals of color, the 17 Fellows will include representation from each of the following groups: Northfield graduates, parents of current Northfield Public Schools students, current Northfield Public Schools non-teaching staff, and community members</p> <p>The Northfield Public Schools will serve as the lead for the project, but will rely on the active participation of a host of community partners who are committed to this project's success.</p>
Project Goal (in one Sentence)	Support 17 local individuals of color in successfully earning a teaching license over the next five years, thereby helping to grow the local teacher workforce and ensure it better reflects the diversity of the Northfield student-body
List All Personnel Involved in Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matt Hillmann • Two Cabinet-level staff will serve on the project's leadership council. • Each Fellow will be paired with a Teacher Mentor (stipends for teachers to voluntarily serve in this role) • Business Office will assist with payments
Budget Information	
Amount Requested	\$297,500 (total – covers five years of project); per grant requirements, 80% of grant funds must be dedicated to scholarships and stipends for participants
Matching Funds	Are Required X Not Required
Source of Matching Funds	Not applicable

Required Documents Attached: Completed Application Rough Draft Summary of Application

Matthew J. Hillmann

Project Initiator Signature

Building Principal or District Administrator
Signature

Approved by the School Board Not Approved by the School Board Date _____

Property Tax Levy and Rate Summary, Taxes Payable in 2021 and 2022

	Certified Levy Payable in 2021		Proposed Levy Payable in 2022	Change
Tax Levy Information				
1. Total Certified Levy Spread on RMV	10,542,237		10,526,258	-15,979
2. General Fund Levy Spread on NTC	4,099,017		3,729,709	-369,308
3. Community Service Fund Levy	422,824		428,563	5,739
4. General Debt Service Levy	5,405,600		5,324,717	-80,883
5. OPEB Debt Service Levy	0		0	0
6. Total Certified Levy	20,469,678		20,009,247 -2.25%	-460,431
Fiscal Disparities Adjustment to Levy				
7. RMV-Based Levies	40,918		40,918	0
8. General Debt Service	20,305		20,305	0
9. Other NTC-Based Levies	16,985		16,985	0
10. Total Fiscal Disparities Adjustment	78,208		78,208	0
Summary of Adjusted Levies				
11. RMV-Based Levies	10,501,319		10,485,340	-15,979
12. General Debt Service	5,385,295		5,304,412	-80,883
13. Other NTC-Based Levies	4,504,857		4,141,288	-363,569
14. Total Adjusted Levies	20,391,470		19,931,039	-460,431
Property Value Information				
15. RMV Used to Calculate Rate	2,716,326,700	6.2%	2,885,992,873	169,666,173
16. NTC Used to Calculate Rate	33,012,288	6.1%	35,012,384	2,000,096
Actual and Estimated Tax Rates				
17. RMV Rate (#11/#15)	0.38660%		0.36332%	-0.02328%
18. NTC Debt Rate (#12/#16)	16.313%		15.150%	-1.163%
19. NTC Other Rate (#13/#16)	13.646%		11.828%	-1.818%

Key Assumptions:

Preliminary Pay 22 values from the MNDOR Approved County AA Summary Report.

Property Tax Levy and Rate Summary, Taxes Payable in 2021 and 2022

	Actual Taxes Payable in 2021	Preliminary Estimate of Taxes Payable in 2022	Estimated Change in Annual Taxes	Estimated % Change
Actual/Estimated Tax Rates				
RMV Tax Rate:	0.38660%	0.36332%		
NTC Debt Tax Rate:	16.313%	15.150%		
NTC Other Tax Rate:	13.646%	11.828%		

Type of Property	Estimated Market Value	Estimated Annual School District Property Taxes			
Residential Homestead	\$75,000	\$425	\$394	-\$31	-7.3%
	100,000	602	557	-45	-7.5%
	125,000	780	721	-59	-7.6%
	150,000	958	886	-72	-7.5%
	175,000	1,136	1,050	-86	-7.6%
	200,000	1,315	1,214	-101	-7.7%
	250,000	1,671	1,543	-128	-7.7%
	300,000	2,028	1,872	-156	-7.7%
	350,000	2,384	2,200	-184	-7.7%
	400,000	2,741	2,529	-212	-7.7%
	500,000	3,431	3,165	-266	-7.8%
Commercial/ Industrial *	\$250,000	\$2,240	\$2,055	-\$185	-8.3%
	500,000	4,704	4,312	-392	-8.3%
	1,000,000	9,633	8,826	-807	-8.4%
	2,000,000	19,491	17,855	-1,636	-8.4%
	4,000,000	39,207	35,913	-3,294	-8.4%
Apartments	\$200,000	\$1,522	\$1,401	-\$121	-8.0%
	500,000	3,805	3,503	-302	-7.9%
	1,000,000	7,611	7,005	-606	-8.0%
	2,000,000	15,222	14,011	-1,211	-8.0%
Agricultural Homestead (dollars per acre) **	\$4,000	\$4.19	\$3.57	-\$0.62	-14.8%
	6,000	6.29	5.36	-0.93	-14.8%
	8,000	8.38	7.14	-1.24	-14.8%
Agricultural Non- Homestead (dollars per acre) **	\$4,000	\$8.38	\$7.14	-\$1.24	-14.8%
	6,000	12.57	10.71	-1.86	-14.8%
	8,000	16.76	14.28	-2.48	-14.8%

Key Assumptions:

- Preliminary Pay 22 values from the MNDOR Approved County AA Summary Report.
 - Assumes no change in the value of individual parcels of property from 2021 to 2022 taxes. If the value of a parcel increased, the change in taxes will be larger than shown above.
 - Taxes payable in 2022 are based on latest estimates of proposed levy, as of the date above.
- * For commercial-industrial property, the tax impact estimates above are for property in Rice and Goodhue counties. For commercial-industrial property in Dakota county, the tax impact would be less than shown above, due to the impact of the Twin Cities Fiscal Disparities program.
- ** For agricultural property, estimates above are based on the average value per acre of agricultural land and buildings. The estimated tax impact for taxes payable in 2022 includes a 60% reduction on the portion attributable to school debt taxes due to the School Building Bond Agricultural Credit. The credit percentage will gradually increase to 70% by taxes payable in 2023. The house, garage, and one acre of land (HGA) would pay taxes at the same rate as residential homestead property. For property owners with greater than \$1.9 million of agricultural homestead land and buildings, a portion of the property will be taxed according to the higher non-homestead rate.