

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

July 10, 2023

District Office Boardroom

1. Call to Order

School Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George called the Regular meeting of the Northfield Board of Education of Independent School District No. 659 to order at 6:00 p.m. Present: Butler, Coleman, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George and Quinnell. Absent: Miller and Nelson. 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 unanimously approved the agenda.

3. Public Comment

There was one public comment.

4. Announcements and Recognitions

- The Raider skeet team won the State Class 1A championship. This was the team's second season competing in skeet. Tadd Stanton took the varsity male and overall high score championship, Jady Scholz took second place in the female JV competition, and Mason Sevcik took second place in the male JV competition.
- Northfield Raider Ella Pagel, wrestler and football player, is the All-Metro Sports Awards Female Athlete of the Year. Ella, who will be a junior this upcoming school year, hasn't lost a high school wrestling match in two years, and she's the only 165-pound high school champ the state has ever known.
- Alisha Clarey completed the rigorous training to become a LETRS Facilitator and is currently training our first, in-person local cohort of 12 teachers. A LETRS certified facilitator is an expert in LETRS content who is qualified to deliver professional learning sessions and provide LETRS support to teachers.
- We welcome three new leaders to our administrative team. Sara Pratt is the Director of Special Services. Sara replaces Cheryl Hall, who retired after 38 years in public education. Caleb Davidson will serve as our Assistant Director of Special Services. Caleb joins us from the Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative (CVSEC), where he served as the lead teacher for the STEP program. John Mahal returns to the district as the Director of Student Activities. John served as a special education teacher in Northfield before holding administrative positions in Shakopee and Albert Lea.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

- a. Policy Committee Recommendations. Superintendent Hillmann presented the policy committee's recommended updates to policies 520.1, 805 and interim updates to the Student Citizenship Handbook. He reviewed the Minnesota School Boards Association's documents describing the recommended policy changes resulting from the 2023 legislative session.
- b. Annual Fundraising Report. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf reviewed the fundraising report as required by Policy 713 Student Activity Accounting.
- c. Benjamin Bus Contract Terms for 2023-2025. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf reviewed the terms of the contract extension with Benjamin Bus. The current contract allows for this two-year extension with the rates to be negotiated. The contract extension will be an item for individual action on the August 14 board meeting.
- d. Staffing Update and Contingency Request. Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on staffing for the 2023-24 school year and requested an increase to the district's contingency FTE budget to address the most pressing class size issues in the district.

On a motion by Coleman, seconded by Butler, the board unanimously approved to move this to an item for individual action at this meeting.

- e. Potential Grant Writer. Superintendent Hillmann presented a concept document about a potential grant writer position. The omnibus education bill includes more than \$150 million in competitive grants over the next two years. This position could help secure funds to advance our strategic plan, commitments, and benchmarks. Dr. Hillmann will prepare a formal proposal and job description for a grant writer for the August 14 board meeting.
- f. Summary of Superintendent's Performance Appraisal. Chair Gonzalez-George shared her summary of the superintendent's annual performance appraisal. All seven board members completed the annual performance appraisal for the period July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023. The evaluation covers all facets of the superintendent's job responsibilities. Board members provided numeric ratings on 1-5 scale (1=low, 5=high) for 41 job responsibilities organized around eight major topics. In addition to completing the numeric ratings, board members provided additional comments. Dr. Hillmann received an outstanding appraisal achieving an overall rating of 4.74/5.00.

6. Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes. Minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on June 12, 2023.
- b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements included in the board packet.
- c. Grant Application. Director of Instructional Services Hope Langston and Instructional Coach Carrie Duba requested school board approval for a \$373,900 three year grant from the Minnesota Department of Education who is receiving funding from the U.S. Department of Education for the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant for the period August 15, 2023 to September 30, 2026. The purpose of this grant is to provide students safe, healthy and supportive learning opportunities and environments. Northfield Public Schools would fund an additional 1.0 FTE Cultural Navigator and a .2 FTE clinical licensed social worker to facilitate parenting groups that center the voice of our Hispanic, multilingual and low-income learns in order to build capacity in their communities, develop their skills in helping their anxious students who struggle to get to school consistently, help them to manage internalizing and externalizing concerns with their children and increase their ability to be more effective advocates for their children's needs in connecting to school.
- d. Policy Revisions Due to Changes in Law. The revisions to policies 102, 418, 419, 424, 425, 507, 509, 513, 514, 516.5, 532, 534, 602, 621, 708 and 709 create substantive change or additions to existing policies. The revisions are directly related to changes in federal or Minnesota law and recommended by the Minnesota School Boards Association.
- e. Fiscal Year Organization Actions. The school district's financial year runs from July 1 to June 30. Each year at the first school board meeting in July, financial organizational issues must be approved. They are as follows:
 - i. Motion to approve authorizing the Director of Finance to invest surplus district funds in accordance with applicable laws and with the district's Policy 705 Investments, for fiscal year 2023-2024.
 - ii. Motion to approve designating PMA/Associated Bank, Frandsen Bank & Trust Dundas, U.S. Bank Minnesota and the Minnesota School District Liquid Asset Fund as official bank depositories provided they maintain adequate pledged collateral as required by law per district Policy 705 Investments, for fiscal year 2023-2024.
 - iii. Motion to approve authorizing the Director of Finance to make appropriate wire transfers to and from district depository accounts for fiscal year 2023-2024.
- f. Memberships for 2023-2024. The school district belongs to several cooperatives, leagues and associations. Membership in the groups listed below should be renewed for the 2023-2024 school year.
 - i. Minnesota State High School League. The designated Northfield High School representative is Activities Director John Mahal and the designated school board representative is Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George.
 - ii. Minnesota Association of School Administrators.
 - iii. Minnesota Association of Charter School Authorizers.
 - iv. Southeast Service Cooperative.
 - v. Region V Computer Services Cooperative.
 - vi. Rice County Family Services Collaborative.

- vii. Minnesota School Boards Association.
- viii. Healthy Community Initiative.

g. Personnel Items

i. Appointments

1. Garrett Hoernke, Summer Instructor/Swim Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, beginning 6/29/2023-8/31/2023. Step 1-\$14.00/hr.
2. Gretta Kunze, Summer Bridges to Kindergarten Teacher for 32 hours total at Bridgewater, beginning 8/7/2023-8/18/2023. BA+10, step 10
3. Tait Narveson, Summer Instructor/Swim Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, beginning 6/26/2023-8/31/2023. Step 1-\$14.00/hr.
4. Christine Peterson, 1.0 FTE Special Ed Resource Room Teacher at the High School, beginning 8/24/2023. MA+40, Step 10
5. Caitlin Robertson, 1.0 FTE Special Ed Resource Room Teacher at Spring Creek, beginning 8/24/2023. MA, Step 5
6. Garret Swenson, Summer KidVentures Site Assistant for 15 hours/week at Spring Creek, beginning 6/16/2023-9/1/2023. Step 4-\$15.91/hr.
7. Kathy Lansing, Summer Bridges to Kindergarten Teacher for 40 hours plus 4 hours for prep at Spring Creek, beginning 8/7/2023-8/18/2023. Short call Sub Rate.
8. Shawna Molloy, 1.0 FTE Special Ed Teacher EBD at the Middle School, beginning 8/24/2023. MA, Step 6
9. Rose Taylor, Special Ed EA PCA for 6.75 hours/day at Spring Creek, beginning 8/28/2023. Step 2-\$17.03/hr. + \$2,500 PCA Stipend.
10. Luke VanZuilen, 1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute Health/Physical Education Teacher at the High School, beginning 8/23/2023-6/6/2024. BA, Step 5

ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment

1. Sara Bartholomew, Special Ed Teacher at the High School, add Special Ed Teacher ESY for up to 3.5 hours/day with the District, effective 6/28/2023-8/3/2023.
2. Michael Bishop Garlitz, Targeted Services Substitute Teacher, add Summer Teacher Substitute and Club Leader for up to 6 hours/day at Bridgewater/Middle School, effective 6/14/2023-8/10/2023. Teacher \$40.00/hr. Club Leader \$23.65/hr.
3. Erin Blanck, ECFE EA at the NCEC, add Summer Casual ECFE EA for a total of 15 hours at the NCEC, effective 6/12/2023-8/22/2023.
4. Brianna Grabinger, ECFE EA at the NCEC, add Summer Casual ECFE EA for a total of 7 hours at the NCEC, effective 6/12/2023-8/22/2023.
5. Monica Irwin, Special Ed EA at Greenvale Park, add .50 FTE Special Ed Teacher EBD/DCD at Greenvale Park, effective 8/24/2023-6/6/2024.
6. Marcy Korynta, School Psychologist at the Middle School, add School Psychologist for up to 24 hours/week at the NCEC, effective 6/12/2023-7/31/2023. Lane/step
7. Annie Kruse, Early Childhood Coordinator at the NCEC, add Special Ed Teacher Mentor at the NCEC, effective 8/15/2023-6/6/2024. \$750 stipend
8. Jennifer Link, Special Ed Teacher at the Middle School, add Special Ed Teacher Mentor at the Middle School, effective 8/15/2023-6/6/2024. \$750 stipend
9. Armando Martinez Rosas, Night Custodian Engineer at Spring Creek, change to Night Custodian Engineer at the High School, effective 7/10/2023. Secondary rate +.30
10. Karen Murphy, Night Custodian Engineer at the High School, change to Night Custodian Engineer at the Middle School, effective 6/12/2023.
11. Kellie O'Meara, Instructor Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, add Summer Instructor Lead with Community Ed Recreation, effective 6/22/2023-8/31/2023. Step 1-\$15.00/hr.
12. Linda Perez, Instructor Assistant with Community Ed Recreation, add Summer Instructor Lead with Community Ed Recreation, effective 6/22/2023-8/31/2023. Step 2-\$15.25/hr.
13. Sam Richardson, Greenvale Park Principal, add Building Supervisor with Community Education, effective 6/26/2023. \$17.89/hr.
14. Christopher Rosas Bermudez, Summer Site Assistant at Bridgewater, add Summer Club Leader for up to 6 hours/day at Bridgewater, effective 6/14/2023-8/10/2023. \$23.65/hr.
15. Rebekka Schrank, General Education Teacher at Spring Creek, change to Special Ed Teacher at Spring Creek, effective 8/24/2023.

16. Natasha Smith, Summer Site Assistant at Bridgewater, add Summer Club Leader for up to 6 hours/day at Bridgewater, effective 6/14/2023-8/10/2023. \$23.65/hr.
17. Juan Trinidad Ramos, Night Custodian Engineer at the Middle School, change to Night Custodian Engineer at the High School, effective 6/12/2023.
18. Sarah Van Sickle, Youth Development Coordinator at the NCEC, change to Targeted Services Coordinator at the ALC, effective 7/1/2023.
19. Alicia Veltri, Special Ed Teacher at Greenvale Park, add Special Ed Teacher Mentor with Portage, effective 9/20/2022-6/9/2023. \$750 stipend
20. Margaret Witt, Sub Teacher with the District, add Special Ed Teacher ESY for up to 3.5 hours/day with the District, effective 6/28/2023-8/3/2023.
21. Community Education Summer Brochure Instructors.
22. Christian Blanck, .8 FTE Art Teacher at the High School, add .10 FTE Art Teacher at the High School, effective 8/24/2023-6/6/2024.
23. Liam Fisher, Auditorium Technician for 728 hours/year with Community Education, add Administrative Support Assistant Class IV for 1,352 hours/year (169 days) at the NCEC, effective 7/10/2023. Class IV, Step 1-\$22.54/hr.
24. Leah Grisim, Teacher at Spring Creek, add Middle School Assistant Girls Soccer Coach, effective 8/30/2023. \$2,539-Stipend
25. Mary Hotz Zenk, 1.0 FTE FACS Teacher at the High School, add an overload in lieu of supervision for semester 2 only at the High School, effective 8/22/2023-6/6/2024.
26. Roanne Johnson, Special Ed Teacher at Bridgewater, add Special Ed Teacher Mentor at Bridgewater, effective 8/15/2023-6/6/2024. \$750 stipend
27. Melanie Klein, Special Ed Teacher at Spring Creek, add Special Ed Teacher Mentor at Spring Creek, effective 8/15/2023-6/6/2024. \$750 stipend
28. Katherine Norrie, 1.0 FTE Art Teacher at the High School, add an overload in lieu of supervision for semester 1 only at the High School, effective 8/24/2023-6/6/2024.
29. Jacob Odell, Special Ed Teacher at the High School, add Special Ed Teacher Mentor at the High School, effective 8/15/2023-6/6/2024. \$750 stipend
30. Juan Trinidad Ramos, Night Custodian Engineer at the High School, change to Head Elementary Custodian at Bridgewater, effective 6/20/2023.
31. Alicia Veltri, Special Ed Teacher at Greenvale Park, add Special Ed Teacher Mentor with the District, effective 9/20/2022-6/6/9023. \$750 stipend

iii. Leave of Absence

1. Adria Fischer, Early Ventures Teacher at the NCEC, FMLA beginning on or about 10/3/2023-1/1/2024.

iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations

1. Denise Halvorson, .4 FTE French Teacher at the High School, resignation effective 6/22/2023.
2. Bonnie Johnson, Administrative Support Assistant at the NCEC, retirement effective 7/19/2023.
3. Maria Richert, Girls Assistant Cross Country Coach at the High School, resignation effective 6/26/2023.
4. Grace Swanson, KidVentures Site Assistant with Community Education, declined position effective 6/21/2023.
5. Rita Lattimore, Custodian at the Middle School, Retirement effective 6/28/2023.

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. Nursing Proposal. On a motion by Butler, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved the addition of a year-round nurse at the NCEC partially funded through recently approved legislation for student support personnel effective for the 2023-24 school year.
- b. Policy Committee Recommendations. On a motion by Coleman, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved the policy committee's recommended updates to the 2023-24 Early Ventures, Hand in Hand Preschool, and Kid Ventures Handbooks.
- c. FY 2023 Audit Engagement Letter. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Butler, the board unanimously accepted the 2022-2023 Engagement Letter from CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP in the amount of \$19,600, Uniform Grant Guidance compliance audit of federal program expenditures (if needed) in the amount of \$4,000 per audited federal program, consulting assistance for SBITDA preparation tools, templates and

calculator in the amount of \$1,500, plus expenses. The engagement letter establishes the parameters and fees associated with the annual audit required by statute.

- d. Resolution Regarding Conducting School Business on the Federal Indigenous Peoples' Day. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Butler, the board unanimously approved by roll call vote, the following resolution regarding Indigenous Peoples' Day.

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes, Section 645.44, Subdivision 5, and Minnesota Statutes, 120A.42 gives the district an option of determining whether Indigenous Peoples' Day shall be a holiday, then BE IT RESOLVED, that Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 9, 2023, shall not be a holiday. Voting 'yes' was Butler, Coleman, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George and Quinnell. No one voted 'no'. Absent: Miller and Nelson.

- e. Resolution Designation of Identified Official with Authority for the MDE External User Access Recertification System. On a motion by Butler, seconded by Coleman, the board unanimously approved by roll call vote, the resolution to authorize Dr. Matthew Hillmann to act as the Identified Official with Authority (IOwA) and Christine Neset to act as the IOwA to add and remove names only for Northfield Public Schools 0659-01. Voting 'yes' was Butler, Coleman, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George and Quinnell. No one voted 'no'. Absent: Miller and Nelson.
- f. Staffing Update and Contingency Request. On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Coleman, the board unanimously approved to increase the district's contingency FTE budget from 1.5 FTE to 3.0 FTE for the 2023-24 school year.

8. Items for Information

9. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, August 14, 2023, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, August 28, 2023, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- c. Monday, September 11, 2023, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

10. Closed Session: Labor negotiation strategy

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Butler, the board unanimously moved to close the meeting as permitted by Minnesota Statute 13D.03 to discuss labor negotiations.

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved to adjourn the closed session at 8:22 p.m.

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Coleman, the board unanimously approved to adjourn at 8:22 p.m.



Amy Goerwitz
School Board Clerk