

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Minutes

School Board Meeting
February 25, 2008
Northfield High School Media Center

- I. Call to Order.
Chairperson Kari Nelson called the regular meeting of the Board of Education of Independent School District 659 to order at 7:00 p.m. Berthelsen was absent.
- II. Agenda Changes.
The table file was added.
- III. Public Comment.
There was no one.
- IV. Approval of Minutes.
On a motion by Cirksena, seconded by Smith, the minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on February 11, 2008, were approved.
- V. Announcements and Recognitions.
 - Congratulations to Middle School Teacher John Bade who is a semifinalist for Minnesota Teacher of the Year.
 - The Student Directed One-Act Play Festival was a big success. The advisors for the plays were Ellen Mucha and Troy Cohrs. Directors were Phoebe Currier, Marie Fischer, Sam Dunnewold, Hannah France and Katherine Peterson.
 - Mock Trial, advised by Sam Wold, ended their season in a loss with a tie-breaker at the Rice County Courthouse in Faribault on Feb 12 against Pine Island.
 - Northfield High School Senior Nicole Nelson wrote a short essay on behalf of the Leadership Skills Class and submitted it to Toyota's Drive for Education Contest. Schools that entered the contest were evaluated on how they best demonstrated a need to use Toyota's \$2,500 grant towards the betterment of education at their high schools. Nicole wrote about possible small and large group projects that the Leadership Skills class could put the money towards. Northfield High School was one of 20 schools in Minnesota awarded \$2,500!
 - The 24th Annual Middle School Spelling Bee held on January 31 was a huge success! Four were awarded the honor of advancing to regional competition. They were seventh graders Hannah Morris and Elia Read and eighth graders Eduardo Jaramillo and Jasmine Barksdale.
 - Students at Greenvale Park Elementary School collected Pennies for Patients to benefit The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. The school-wide total was \$5187.44.
 - Raider Gymnastics is sending 3 girls to their State Meet on Feb. 22-23, Hannah Dvorak, Sveta Mason and Lindsay Henrickson. The gymnasts are coached by Melissa Cummins.
 - Two weightlifters competed at the Jr National Championships. Cory Callahan placed 6th and Chris Smith placed 9th at the Tennessee meet. They are coached by Scott Sahli.
 - Our sympathy to the Cottonwood School District on the death of four of their students in a bus accident.
 - Congratulations to Northfield Wrestlers Brendon Kennedy and Tristan Faust who move on to state competition.
- VI. Items for Discussion and / or Reports
 1. Elementary Intra District Transfer Guidelines.
Sibley Elementary School Principal Scott Sannes presented to the Board a proposal to modify the intra district transfer guidelines so that an approved intra district transfer is only good for one year. The last modification of this procedure was made during the budget reduction process when students, including those whose elementary school attendance area was changed by boundary changes, were allowed to request an intra district transfer back into the building

they had previously attended. Elementary principals have become concerned with the need to balance elementary class sizes, especially since two years of budget cuts have increased class sizes significantly. Requiring parents to request an intra district transfer from their home attendance area each year will allow elementary principals to determine if those transfers would overcrowd particular classrooms or better balance classroom sections. Flexibility in accepting intra district transfer requests would support more uniform classroom size and reduce imbalances between classroom sections. The Board requested information on the current number of intra district transfers by grade and by school. Also, the suggestion was made to make it extremely clear on the form that this request is for one year only and they will need to reapply each year. The Board will act on this proposal at its next meeting on March 10, 2008.

VII. Superintendent's Report

A. Items for Individual Action

1. 2008-2009 School Year Calendar.

On a motion by Hager, seconded by Stratmoen, the Board approved the 2008-2009 school year calendar as presented.

B. Items for Consent Grouping.

On a motion by Smith, seconded by Cirksena, the Board approved the following items listed under the Consent Grouping.

1. Financial Reports – January 2008.

Tom Stringer and Yosh Soltis are requesting that the Board approve paid bills totaling \$1,436,541.77, payroll checks totaling \$1,817,892.00, bond payments of \$4,268,900.65 and the financial reports for January 2008.

2. Grant Application to MN State High School League (MSHSL) Foundation.

The Northfield Public Schools is a member of the Missota Conference. The Missota Conference is requesting a \$4,360 funding grant from the MN State High School League Foundation to support the MSHSL student leadership initiative, a one-day conference focusing on team building, goal setting, diversity awareness, motivation, confidence building, decision-making, communication and leadership. The school board of each school district within the Missota Conference is requested to approve this grant application.

3. Personnel Items.

a. Appointments**

1. Cassie Hollander, Site Assistant for KidVentures at Sibley, corrected hours are 5.0 hours/day, beginning February 19, 2008, at an hourly rate of \$10.50. There are no benefits with this position.
2. Bruce Santerre, Independent Consultant Contract for up to 30 days at a daily rate of \$422.64.
3. Deborah Christensen, Speech/Language Assistant at Sibley School for 6.5 hours per day, beginning February 21, 2008, through April 25, 2008, \$19.64 per hour. There are no benefits with this temporary position.
4. Tresa Mazurek, Special Ed Educational Assistant at Bridgewater School for 6.5 hours per day beginning February 25, 2008, Class III, step 1.
5. Co-Curricular Assignments
 - John Holm, Middle School Track Assistant
 - Jill Ertl, Senior Class Advisor
 - Ellen Mucha, Yearbook Co-Advisor, ½ stipend
 - Troy Cohrs, Yearbook Co-Advisor, ½ stipend
6. Dawn Knutson, long-term substitute ECSE Teacher at Longfellow from February 26, 2008, through June 5, 1008, BA-5.

b. Increase/Decrease in Hours/Change in Assignment for Staff

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1. Arlene Tuma, ECFE Educational Assistant, decrease from 16.0 to 13.0 hours per week beginning February 12, 2008.
2. Lee Engelby, transfer from Custodian Engineer position at Longfellow to a Custodian Engineer position at the High School, effective February 25, 2008.

c. Retirements/Resignations

1. Kathy Sutherland, retirement effective April 15, 2008. Ms. Sutherland has been with the district since 1985.
2. Carol Gengenbach, Grade 2 Teacher, retirement effective at the end of the 2007-08 school year. Ms. Gengenbach has been with the district since 1984.
3. Mary Bleckwehl, resignation effective end of 2006-07 school year.
4. Michelle West, resignation effective February 15, 2008.

d. Leave of Absence

1. Kristen Johnson, intermittent FMLA leave from February 29, 2008 through April 28, 2008.

** Conditional offers of employment are subject to successful completion of a criminal background check.

4. Gift Agreement.

The Sibley PTO has donated \$1227.31 to the Media Center at Sibley Elementary School.

VIII. Items for Information

1. March 2 – 8, School Social Worker Week.

The Northfield School District proclaimed the week of March 2-8 as School Social Worker Week. They work with students, families, staff and the community to provide the necessary services for children to succeed in school. The role of the school social worker is a vital link between students, family and community. Our district currently employs six School Social Workers.

2. Composting Update.

The School District has had a preliminary discussion with a representative from Carleton College regarding a grant Carleton has received to begin a composting project and a possible partnership during phase two of the project.

3. Middle School Teacher Jackie Magnuson will become President of the Minnesota School Boards Association effective March 1, 2008. This appointment is earlier than expected due to the resignation of the current President. Ms. Magnuson is a School Board Member in District 196.

4. Needs of ESL students in the Northfield School District.

Superintendent Richardson referred to the document distributed to Board members last week regarding this issue and the impact of one or more schools being placed in the "needs improvement" category for NCLB. While the document is not yet complete, it should give the Board a sense of the issues the District is facing and what may need to be done to address them. Once the document is complete, it will be shared with the Companeros Review Team and with the Board of Education.

IX. Future Meetings

Monday, March 10, 2008, 7:00 PM, Regular School Board Meeting, Northfield High School Media Center
No meeting on March 24, 2008

X. On a motion by Hargis, seconded by Hager, the Board adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Katy Hargis, Clerk