

# NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## School Board Minutes

School Board Meeting  
February 9, 2009  
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 pm. Stratmoen was absent.

II. Agenda Changes.

The table file was added.

III. Public Comment

There was none.

IV. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Cirksena, the minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on January 26, 2009, were unanimously approved.

V. Announcements and Recognitions

- Eighteen Middle School students took part in the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual District Spelling Bee competition held at the Middle School on January 27. Eighth grader Laura Bashor became the champion when she correctly spelled *brazen* and *shepherd*. In second place, was sixth grade student, Sam Carlson. The third place title was awarded to eighth grader, Jessica Holmes, and fourth place was given to eighth grader Sara Ludewig. Along with Bee advisor, Amy Sieve, all four students will advance to the regional competition, which will be held in Rochester on February 17.
- Svea Drentlaw, Sonja Wermager and Hannah France, the three members of the high school's Music Listening team that advanced to state competition at Augsburg College, placed third. Their advisor is Karen Madsen.
- The District's application for \$50,000 over three years for the high school and middle school Project Lead the Way programs has been approved by the Kern Family Foundation. Project Lead the Way is a private entity that provides software and training for the implementation of a more formal pre-engineering focus in our Industrial Technology Departments.
- Greenvale Park Principal Dave Craft is the recipient of the 2008-2009 MN Elementary School Principals Association's Leadership Achievement Award for the Southeast Division. The award expresses appreciation to outstanding men and women in the principalship who have contributed generously to improving education, their communities, and their profession.
- Cheryl Mathison, a teacher at the Area Learning Center, is one of 27 semifinalists for this year's Minnesota Teacher of the Year award. The 2009 Teacher of the Year will be announced on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Now posted on the District's website are menus that contain nutritional content. It can be found by clicking on Support Services and then Food Service. Thanks to so many who worked hard to make this happen.
- Cirksena and Iverson attended the five student-directed One-Act Plays. They were excellent.

VI. Items for Discussion and / or Reports

1. Financial Forecast and Budget Assumptions for the Development of the 2009-2010 Budget.

The Financial Advisory Committee of the Board met on February 2, 2009 and reviewed enrollments, on-going cost containment measures and numerous forecast scenarios. Tom Stringer presented the forecast and highlighted comments from the advisory group.

The Advisory committee affirmed the concern about the unpredictability of both state revenues and the federal stimulus package. The board should revisit the assumptions again in March.

The following budget assumptions are included in the current forecast:

- Stable/slight decrease in K-12 enrollment
- State General Education formula increase of 0% for the next two years
- No increase in Federal revenue
- No increase in State Special Ed revenue
- Operating referendum of \$1,180 per pupil beginning in 2007-08 thru 2013-14 with inflation
- A proposed freeze in salary schedules for one year for all employees (The proposed salary freeze for teachers would be for 2009-10, the first year of their new contract. Because the two-year non-teacher contracts were settled last summer for 2008-09 and 2009-10, that freeze would occur in 2010-11.)
- The need to find \$225,000 in additional cost savings to keep the general fund in structural balance during the next two years.
- Aggregate increase in expenditures of 3.66% for the remaining four years of the forecast (2011-12 through 2014-15)
- Maintain a minimum fund balance of 5% of expenditures
- A staffing ratio at the same level as 2008-09

Further, the committee encouraged the development of a marketing plan, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis to develop strategies to maintain a stable student population, a review of the district website and continued exploration of on-line learning opportunities.

Nelson reported that she has been speaking with the Mayor about a joint meeting with the City Council. No board action was required.

## VII. Superintendent's Report

### A. Items for Individual Action

#### 1. Resolution Requiring the Administration to Make Recommendations Regarding Programming and Staffing for Next Year.

On a motion by Berthelsen, seconded by Maple, the Board unanimously authorized the administration to make recommendations for additions and reductions in program and for adding or discontinuing positions. Voting 'yes' was Berthelsen, Maple, Cirksena, Iverson, Quinnell and Nelson. No one voted 'no.' Stratmoen was absent.

#### 2. Student Teacher Resolution with Minnesota State Colleges & Universities System.

On a motion by Iverson, seconded by Cirksena, the Board unanimously approved the following Resolution: Be it Resolved, that the Northfield School District enter into an agreement with the State of Minnesota, MnSCU, for the purpose of providing student teaching experiences for students from Southwest Minnesota State University. Voting 'yes' was Berthelsen, Maple, Cirksena, Iverson, Quinnell and Nelson. No one voted 'no.' Stratmoen was absent.

### B. Items for Consent Grouping.

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

#### 1. Contracts with KFI, PDG and ICS.

The Board approved administration's recommendation that the Board engage the services of project consultants for the Sibley Elementary School Addition and Remodeling as follows: Project Owner Representation/Program Management services to be provided by ICS Consulting, Inc., Spring Lake Park, MN; Project Architectural/Structural /Civil design services to be provided by Professional Design Group, Northfield, MN; Mechanical and Electrical Engineering design services to be provided by Karges-Faulconbridge, Inc., Roseville, MN. Further, the Board authorized administration to execute, on behalf of Northfield Public Schools, contract agreements with each of the firms above, subject to final review of District legal counsel, and in consideration of the conditions of the Board's Project Resolution on December 22, 2008.

2. Community Services Revised 2008-2009 Budget.  
The revised revenue budget of \$2,009,322 and expenditure budget of \$ 1,985,261 for Community Services was approved.
3. Gift Agreement.  
Knecht's Nurseries and Landscaping donated 14 trees valued at \$5,320. Eleven trees were planted in the softball complex and three were planted by the JV baseball field.
4. Personnel Items.
  - a. Appointments\*\*
    1. Stephanie Mahal, long-term substitute Occupational Therapist from April 17, 2009 – June 5, 2009, MA-1. There are no benefits with this position.
    2. John Garvey, 0.15 Social Studies Teacher at the High School from January 30, 2009 – June 5, 2009, BA-0. There are no benefits with this position.
    3. Co-Curricular Assignments
      - Allison Bartron, JV Dance Team Assistant Coach (Hourly)
      - Deborah Rasmussen, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Assistant Track Coach
    4. Community Service Winter/Spring Instructors
    5. Marcy Goss, Special Ed Educational Assistant – PCA for 6.25 hours per day at the Middle School, beginning February 17, 2009, Class III - PCA, step 1.
  - b. Leaves of Absence
    1. Katherine Seifert, FMLA leave from January 16-23, 2009.
    2. Julie Healy, Intermittent FMLA leave from February 2, 2009, for up to 12 weeks.
    3. Ann Hehr, FMLA leave from January 14, 2009 – February 23, 2009.
  - c. Increase/Decrease/Change in Position
    1. Julie Brown, ECSE Educational Assistant-PCA, increase from 17.5 to 25.5 hours per week from February 4, 2009 – June 5, 2009.
  - d. Resignations
    1. Angela Blake, PLUS Program Site Assistant, resignation with last day of work January 19, 2009.

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

#### VIII. Items for Information

1. 2009-2010 School Year Calendar.  
The Meet and Confer Calendar Committee faced challenges as they tried to build consensus around a particular calendar option. The two major challenges being faced were:
  - The lateness of the statutory starting date (September 8) and the impact on when the school year would end in June. This was complicated by the possibility that the State could change the statute and allow for an earlier start.
  - The desire to move toward a meaningful one-hour block of time each week for all Professional Learning Communities.

The Meet and Confer Calendar Committee met on Monday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> and reached consensus around two calendars, one with the current statutory after Labor Day start and one with an alternate before Labor Day start. Both calendars had an identical full two week Winter Break as well as a week long Spring Break and other shorter breaks during the year. The major difference is the start and end dates, which are driven by the before or after Labor Day start. The committee also reached consensus on moving to K-12 using the quarter system and eliminating two-hour late starts and early releases in favor of a weekly late start or early release. The Superintendent's Cabinet met on Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup> and determined that a one- hour late start on Monday mornings would be the best

placement for the weekly Professional Learning Community meetings. Wednesday afternoons were also considered for a one-hour early release, but concerns about the large number of unsupervised co-curricular participants resulted in the decision to select the Monday morning late start option.

Administration recommended that the two options be shared with the full staff and community and offer an opportunity to provide e-mail feedback. The calendars will be posted on the Website as well as frequently asked questions about the weekly one-hour late start for Professional Learning Communities to meet. Input will be gathered for a month and then the Board of Education will be asked to vote on the calendar with any appropriate modifications on March 9<sup>th</sup>.

2. Enrollment Report – February 2009.

IX. Future Meetings

Monday, February 23, 2009, 7:00 PM, Regular School Board meeting, Bridgewater's Cafetorium

Monday, March 9, 2009, 7:00 PM, Regular School Board meeting, Northfield High School Media Center

X. On a motion by Berthelsen, seconded by Quinnell, the Board adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Diane Cirksena, School Board Clerk