

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Minutes

School Board Meeting
December 14, 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. No one 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 Iverson, the minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on November 23, 2009, were unanimously approved.

V. Announcements and Recognitions

- Director of Community Services Hannah Puczko was installed as the 2010 President of the National Community Education Association at the group's annual conference held in November.
- Superintendent Richardson reported that the Companeros review sessions held in October were very well attended. The Committee is reviewing the comments received and will be coming to the Board in February 2010 with its recommendation.
- The Traditions Concert held December 12 at Carleton College was superb.
- The Fine Arts Booster Club has held two organizational meetings. They are planning two pilot radio segments in the New Year on KYMN followed by a weekly radio event spotlighting an area of the Fine Arts and upcoming events.
- Thank you to the custodial staff for their work in keeping the District's parking lots and sidewalks free of snow and ice.

VI. Items for Discussion and / or Reports

1. Truth-in-Taxation Presentation for the 2010 Property Tax Levy followed by Public Comment.

The amount of the levy for 2010 is \$14,605,615.02 and represents a 1.66% increase. The final property tax levy for 2010 has decreased slightly from the proposed levy set in September. Tom Stringer, Director of Business Affairs, reviewed the levy and the current year's budget.

Highlights for school taxes in 2010:

- The School District in September had given preliminary approval to a 1.89% levy increase for 2010. The recommended levy is a 1.66% increase over 2009.
- 76 percent of school district taxes are voter-approved levies.
- The remaining taxes are levied for specific purposes as determined by state statutes.

Three Funds have a levy component:

- General fund tax revenue - which is used for day-to-day operations - will decrease by about \$96,000. The levy represents 21% of total sources for the fund. State aids and fees make up the remainder.
- There is relatively no change in the Community Services Levy.
- Tax revenue to pay off facility debt will increase by about \$336,000 based on pre-established payment schedules when the bonds were sold.

The public was invited to speak following the presentation. Jan Mitchell spoke and expressed her appreciation to the administration and School Board for how well the District manages its finances. The community is getting great value for their tax dollars.

2. School / Site Improvement Plan Reports – Community Services and Northfield High School.

Two more improvement plans were presented to the School Board. High School Principal Joel Leer presented the High School's Annual Progress Report and School Improvement Plan. Hannah Puczko,

Director of Community Services, and ECFE Lead Teacher Mary Loven presented Community Services report and plan.

3. Marketing Survey

In October, the District invited parents who open enroll their students in or out of the Northfield School District to take a survey about why families either choose Northfield Schools or choose to attend elsewhere. Director of Community Services Hannah Puczko presented the results. Of the 450 parents of students eligible to attend Northfield Schools, but do not, sixty-five responded representing a 14% return. Of the 229 open enrolled parents, 37 responded representing a 16% return. Results showed that parents who open enrolled chose the Northfield School District because of academic reputation, quality of instruction, and curriculum choices. Quality of instruction and curriculum choices remained their highest ranked reasons for choosing to return to Northfield Schools in the 2009-10 school year. The families eligible for ISD 659, but whose students are attending school elsewhere primarily chose Prairie Creek Charter School (26%) or St. Dominic School (30%). These parents indicated the school's positive climate (43%) and class size (41%) as their two main reasons for their school selection. It is important to note that a very small number of people responded to the survey. The primary reasons for choosing Northfield Schools are consistent with what was predicted. While there is a need to gather more information in other ways in the next weeks, it is anticipated that this information will be used to design marketing strategies as identified in the District's marketing plan. Given the low response, Berthelsen suggested focus groups, and when investigating why students leave the District, explore if the reason is because of a "push" or a "pull" to a different district.

VII. Superintendent's Report

A. Items for Individual Action

1. Certify Final 2009 Payable 2010 Tax Levy.

On a motion by Berthelsen, seconded by Maple, the Board unanimously certified to the County Auditors the 2009 payable 2010 final certified net tax levy in the amount of \$14,605,615.02.

B. Items for Consent Grouping.

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

1. Commissioning Services Contract – Sibley Elementary.

School construction projects in Minnesota are required to have an engineer inspect, validate and report that the mechanical HVAC (Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning) systems are performing as designed and built. The Board awarded the Commissioning contract to Karges, Faulconbridge, Inc. The Sibley project budget has a placeholder of \$15,000 for commissioning. In addition, a Change Order was processed that gave a \$2,500 deduct for not having the contractor perform the Testing and Balancing, which will be performed by KFI.

2. Student Activity Account Transfer – Gymnastics.

The Board approved transferring up to \$2800 from the Gymnastics student activity account into a payroll account to pay for additional coaches. The rate of pay will be \$12 per hour. The Gymnastics team intentionally fundraised so that more coaches could be secured.

3. Pool / Locker Room Fees.

The Board approved adjusting the fees in the facility use procedures to reflect a change in the cost of hourly rental of the Northfield Middle School pool and locker rooms. The change will be effective September 1, 2009. Adjustments will be made to the current long-term agreement with the Northfield Swim Club and the Club's permits for swim meets to reflect the change in fees.

4. Revised Facilities Agreement with Northfield Swim Club.
The Board approved the revised facilities Agreement with the Northfield Swim Club, which is retroactive to September 1, 2009.
5. Gift Agreement.
The Sibley PTO has donated \$10,171 to Sibley Elementary School to be used towards the purchase and installation of seven SmartBoards in Sibley classrooms.
6. Personnel Items.
 - a. Appointments**
 1. Kathleen Clark, Office Generalist/Special Education at the High School, beginning 12/10/09, Class II, Step 1, \$15.25/hour.
 2. Annie Fitzgerald, Site Assistant at Greenvale Park, 1.75 hrs./week, beginning on 12/2/09, Step 1, \$11.03/hour.
 3. Alexis Bloch, Student Site Assistant at Bridgewater Elementary, 1.25 hrs./week, beginning on 11/4/09, Step 1, \$7.93/hour.
 4. Lynette Galchutt, Early Childhood Teacher at Longfellow, 14 hrs./week, beginning 12/11/09, \$21.59/hour.
 5. Co-Curricular Assignments:
 - a. Grady McGovern, Assistant Boys Baseball Coach, beginning 3/22/10, \$14.00/hour.
 - b. Amy Allin, Middle School Science Club Advisor, Level L, (step 1).
 - c. Katherine Rush, Assistant Middle School Speech Coach, Level L, (step 1).
 - d. Co-Curricular Assignments – See attached list.
 6. Erica Hubers, Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA at Bridgewater, 6.5 hrs./day beginning 12/11/09, \$13.26/hour.
 - b. Leaves of Absence
 1. Doug Tschann, extending FMLA leave of absence through 12/18/09, returning to work on 1/4/10.
 2. Kathy Flicek, FMLA leave of absence beginning on 12/1/09 on an intermittent basis through 2/28/10.
 3. Lisa Hovden, FMLA childcare leave of absence from on or about 3/5/10 for 12 weeks.
 4. Troy Deden, extending FMLA leave of absence through March, 2010.
 - c. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment
 1. Beth McClune, Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA, from 6.5 hrs./day to 6.75 hrs./day, effective 9/8/09 through 6/11/10.
 2. Kim Medin, Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA, from 6.75 hrs./day to 7 hrs./day, effective 11/30/09 to 6/11/10.
 3. Tammy Schwagerl, Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA, from 6.75 hrs./day to 7.0 hrs./day, effective 11/30/09 to 6/11/10.
 4. Andrea Waldock, Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA, from 6.8 hrs./day to 7.55 hrs./day effective 11/30/09 through 6/11/10.
 5. Colleen DeWall, Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA, from 6.75 hrs./day to 7 hrs./day, effective 12/8/009.
 6. Robert Garcia, 2.5 hrs./week Targeted Services Teacher at Greenvale Park, from 12/8/09 through 4/29/10.
 - d. The Board approved the 2009-10 Teacher Seniority List and 2009-10 Principals/Assistant Principals Seniority List.

*Lane placement subject to verification by Professional Growth Committee.

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

VIII. Items for Information

1. Enrollment Report – December 1.

2. MN School Board's Association Awards Luncheon.

At the Awards Luncheon on Thursday, January 14, 2010, Noel Stratmoen will be honored for 30-years of service on the Northfield Board of Education. The luncheon will be held beginning at 11:30 AM at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Board members were asked to Let Donita Delzer know if they plan to attend.

3. TIES 2009 Exceptional Teachers.

Congratulations to Sibley Elementary School's Ann Hehr and Northfield Middle School's Mick Hamilton on their selection as 2009 TIES Exceptional Teachers. Ann and Mick will receive their awards and special recognition at the TIES Conference on Tuesday, December 15, 2009 in Minneapolis.

IX. Future Meetings

Monday, January 11, 2010, 7:00 PM, Organizational Meeting followed by the Regular School Board Meeting, Northfield High School Media Center

Monday, January 25, 2010, 7:00 PM, Regular School Board Meeting, Northfield High School Media Center

X. On a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Maple, the Board adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Ellen Iverson, School Board Clerk