

**NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**School Board Minutes**

School Board Meeting  
March 8, 2010  
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

A community member expressed concern about the District continuing the Compañeros program because she feels it discriminates against other immigrant students. Two other parents who reside in or near the Keya Paha neighborhood indicated their displeasure with the length of the bus ride in the busing proposal presented to Keya Paha residents in response to their request that the Board reconsider assigning their students from Bridgewater to Greenvale Park.

IV. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Iverson, the minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on February 22, 2010, were unanimously approved.

V. Announcements and Recognitions

- Elementary students raised approximately \$2000 for relief efforts in Haiti during their “Hats for Haiti” campaign. Students were allowed to wear a hat during the school day if they contributed \$1.
- Kidzsing Choral Festival was held on February 28th for students in grades 4-6 at Sibley, Bridgewater, Greenvale Park and Northfield Middle School. The performance was excellent! Thank you to all the elementary and 6th grade music teachers!
- Four school district staff have been selected to participate in the Blandin Community Leadership Week March 8 - 12. They are High School Assistant Principal Jeff Eckhoff, Community Services Recreation Coordinator Erin Mayberry, Bridgewater School Site Specialist Mary Nelson, and Growing Up Healthy Coordinator Janet Lewis-Muth. During the week the group will cover topics such as building a healthy community, interpersonal communication, conflict management and effective community mobilization.
- For the first time in school history (61 years), the NHS Gymnastics team has won State and the whole wrestling team went to State with five wrestlers qualifying individually.
- The Boys Swimming and Diving team took second at their section meet and a number of swimmers have qualified for the State meet.
- The Science Olympiad Team qualified for State and the team is also Region Champs.
- The Weightlifting team qualified for State as well.

VI. Items for Discussion and / or Reports

1. Response to Additional Questions Regarding the Compañeros Proposal.

Administrators responded to additional questions regarding the Compañeros proposal that were raised at the February 22<sup>nd</sup> School Board meeting. Amy Moeller, Heather Ryden and Gary Lewis reviewed why a cap on the number of Compañeros sections at each grade level is necessary and the rationale for maintaining a controlled lottery process with the proposal. Finally, Superintendent Richardson presented the options for transporting students from Keya Paha to Greenvale Park and Bridgewater, should parents request a transfer from Greenvale Park to Bridgewater under the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act.

2. Proposed 2010-2011 Debt Service Budget.

The proposed Debt Service Budget was presented by Tom Stringer, Director of Business Affairs. The Debt Service Fund accounts for the School District's outstanding bonded indebtedness for past building construction and major capital projects. Revenues represent property tax levies, state credits, and a minor amount of interest. Expenditures represent principal and interest payments on bonds previously sold. In addition, the District recently refinanced \$22,615,000 of the Middle School Bonds. This will result in a reduction of the property tax levy beginning in calendar 2011 by approximately \$205,000 annually. No action was required by the Board.

3. Proposed 2010-2011 Trust Fund Budget.

The proposed Trust Fund Budget was also presented. The Trust Fund accounts for the money placed in trust with the District for specified purposes. The majority of the activity is for student scholarships. No action was required by the Board.

VII. Superintendent's Report

A. Items for Individual Action

1. Compañeros Program Revisions.

On a motion by Berthelsen, seconded by Pritchard, the Board unanimously approved the Compañeros Proposal including the components of Proposal D, the ESL Kindergarten Proposal, and the attendance and transportation options for the Sibley attendance area Compañeros students and Keya Paha area students currently attending Bridgewater.

2. Resolution Proposing to Discipline an Employee.

On a motion by Maple, seconded by Iverson, the Board unanimously approved the Resolution Proposing to Discipline an Employee as presented. Voting 'yes' was Berthelsen, Maple, Iverson, Pritchard, Quinnell, Stratmoen and Nelson. No one voted 'no.'

3. Request by a Parent to Modify a Student's Grade and Clarify Grading Procedures.

Chair Nelson suggested and the Board subsequently agreed to recess into closed session at the conclusion of the Regular Board meeting to discuss private information that is protected by Data Practices.

B. Items for Consent Grouping.

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

1. Area Learning Center Grant Applications.

The Board approved the Area Learning Center's two grant applications:

- A \$1,860 Federal Drug Free Communities Grant request to the Rice County Chemical Health Coalition and HCI to research and implement curriculum into the ALC health class. This spring student's would review programs that target reduction of youth substance use and then implement the chosen curriculum into the health class at the ALC next school year.
- A \$600 grant request to the Grace Whittier Fund to cover the remaining outfitting expenses for the ALC's BWCA trip scheduled for June.

2. Financial Reports – January 2010.

The Board approved paid bills totaling \$1,634,374.00, payroll checks totaling \$1,934,279.14, bond payments of \$4,512,692.52 and the financial reports for January 2010.

3. Personnel Items.

a. Appointments\*\*

1. Dan Meyers, Assistant Boys Baseball Coach, Level F, (step 3).
2. Mary Harrity-Davidson, Middle School Boys Tennis Coach, Level I, (step 10).
3. Co-Curricular Assignments for March (as presented).

b. Leave of Absence

1. Andrew Gilbertson, FMLA leave beginning on or about 3/19/10 and ending on or about 4/20/10.

c. Resignations/Terminations

1. Krista Morrow, Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA at Sibley, resignation effective 2/22/10.
2. Tony Burciaga, Student Site Assistant, termination effective 2/23/10.
3. Chelsie Connolly, Student Site Assistant, termination effective 2/23/10.
4. Annie Fitzgerald, Site Assistant, termination effective 2/23/10.
5. Shilada Madson, Student Site Assistant, termination effective 2/23/10.
6. Andrew McMahon, Site Assistant, resignation effective 2/3/10.
7. Bryan Miller, Student Site Assistant, termination effective 2/23/10.
8. Victoria Tigner, Site Assistant, termination effective 2/23/10.

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

4. Student Activity Account Transfer.

The Board approved transferring up to \$600 from the Speech student activity account into a payroll account to pay for additional coaches. The rate of pay will be \$12 per hour.

VIII. Items for Information

1. Professional Learning Communities Input Process.

Superintendent Richardson shared with the Board information about how the District is gathering feedback from parents on their opinions about Professional Learning Communities and possible scheduling changes for the 2010-11 school year. Parents have been invited to provide feedback by completing a survey that can be found on the District's website. The survey is available now and until March 26. Results will be shared with the Board in April and recommendations will be formulated and presented at that time. If individuals do not have access to the internet, they can call the District office for a paper copy of the survey.

2. Enrollment Report – March 1, 2010.

IX. Future Meetings

Monday, March 22, 2010, 7:00 PM, Regular School Board Meeting, Northfield High School Media Center  
Monday, April 12, 2010, 7:00 PM, Regular School Board Meeting, Northfield High School Media Center

X. On a motion by Pritchard, seconded by Iverson, the Board recessed into closed session at 8:45 PM.

The Board reconvened in closed session at 8:49 PM in the District Office Conference Room to discuss a letter the Board received from a parent requesting a change in a student grade and clarification of grading procedures. The following individuals were present: Mike Berthelsen, Ellen Iverson, Julie Pritchard, Jeff Quinnell, Noel Stratmoen, Kari Nelson, High School Principal Joel Leer, Superintendent Chris Richardson, and Director of Human Resources and Technology Matt Hillmann.

The Board discussed this matter. Then on a motion by Stratmoen, seconded by Pritchard, the Board unanimously adjourned the closed session and immediately reconvened in an open session at 10:10 PM.

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Iverson, the Board unanimously approved the following statement:

Questions about a student's grade should be brought first to the teacher, then the principal and finally to the Superintendent. The Superintendent has final authority for making any grade modifications, and the Board will not hear appeals from the Superintendent's final decision. Through this process the Board has learned more about the Skyward software. We affirm the importance of transparency in communications between schools, teachers, parents and students. The Board affirms the administration's actions to configure Skyward software so that the Teacher Access grade book view is the same as the Family Access and Student Access views.

On a motion by Pritchard, seconded by Stratmoen, the Board adjourned at 10:12 PM.

Ellen Iverson, School Board Clerk