

# NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## School Board Minutes

School Board Meeting  
October 25, 2010  
Northfield High School Media Center

- I. Call to Order.  
Board Chair Kari Nelson called the meeting of the Northfield Board of Education to order at 7:00 PM.
- II. Agenda Changes.  
The table file was added.
- III. Public Comment.  
Three community members addressed the Board:  
Scott Quiring: Representing Amcon, a commercial construction company. He and his company would be willing to explore other facility possibilities free of charge, such as a field house.  
Anthony Becker: While not opposed to the YMCA coming to Northfield, Mr. Becker expressed opposition to constructing the Y on school district/taxpayer land. The mission of the school district is to foster diversity and the Y is a Christian organization. Since these are uncertain times, could the Y be a distraction to the Board's work in the future?  
Tristan Cox: Mr. Cox reinforced what Anthony said. He simply does not feel that the Y proposal is a good deal for the school district.
- IV. Approval of Minutes.  
On a motion by Iverson, seconded by Maple, the minutes of the Regular School Board meeting held on October 11, 2010, were unanimously approved. Board Chair Nelson thanked Vice Chair Noel Stratmoen for chairing the October 11, 2010 meeting on her behalf.
- V. Announcements and Recognitions.
  - The High School girls soccer team raised over \$11,500 for its Lace for the Cure fundraiser. The team is donating all the money to the Susan G. Komen Foundation to support breast cancer research, education and treatment. The Northfield High School girls soccer team is also the October recipient of the Healthy Community Initiative "Making A Difference" Award.
  - A special thank you to Arlene Kjar and Prairie Partners of Cannon Valley for obtaining a \$900 grant from the Northfield Garden Club. With this money they will build benches for the outdoor classroom space, repair the sign on the west side and purchase seeds, flowers and rare grasses for planting in the Greenvale Park nature area.
  - Board members were invited to Bridgewater's bus driver appreciation breakfast this Thursday, October 28. We are so appreciative of all that our drivers do to keep our students safe each and every day.
  - Prior the beginning of the Board meeting, the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Award was presented in Northfield High School in recognition of the school building's indoor environment performance.
- VI. Items for Discussion and / or Reports
  1. Professional Learning Communities Presentations – Early Childhood and Greenvale Park.  
Presentations by Early Childhood and Greenvale Park were the first in a series of monthly informational reports on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The intent is to provide similar presentations to the Board from other buildings on a monthly basis. The purpose of these sessions will be to showcase the efforts of teachers implementing PLCs and the positive impact of their work on students.  
  
The Board first heard a presentation from Cheryl Hall, who discussed the PLC process at Longfellow and the progress made last year. She then presented each PLC's SMART goal for this school year. Mary Arndt, representing Early Childhood Family Education, explained ECFE's work on establishing their central learnings and gathering data on student performance.

The Board then viewed a video presentation that highlighted the work being done in the fifth grade Professional Learning Community at Greenvale Park on the implementation of mathematical reasoning. Greenvale Park Staff Amy Tacheny, Abby Swanson and Jackie Harding answered questions from the Board about how the work of their PLC is communicated to parents.

VII. Superintendent's Report

A. Items for Individual Action

1. YMCA Facilities Proposal.

Chairperson Nelson reviewed the history of the Y's facilities proposal to the Board and what the Board has done since the Y's June 14, 2010 presentation to the Board. She then thanked the administration, ICS Consulting and the YMCA for their diligence in providing the Board with information as the Board considered the proposal. She thanked the community for sharing their thoughts with Board members as well.

Berthelsen moved and Iverson seconded the following motion:

"The Northfield School District agrees to proceed into negotiation with the Northfield YMCA regarding the construction of a building that through a joint use agreement would be built and operated by the Northfield YMCA.

The School District criteria for these negotiations will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The agreement provides additional needed facility space to the School District without added taxes for construction or operations. The YMCA must have a realistic business plan to cover all operational costs as well as a plan for scheduled facility renewal.
2. The partnership will be based on a transparent contract providing clarity to each organization's rights and obligations, including decision-making; uses, and scheduling.
3. The building will be transferred to the ownership of the school district in accordance with State Statutes.
4. The building will be built to a construction standard consistent with Northfield School District standards.
5. The YMCA will build a facility based upon actual pledges and a financial plan that assumes no long-term debt at the time of transfer. Specific financial objectives will be determined for each stage of design to proceed. A significant percent of the capital campaign dollars must be either in-hand or legally committed for transfer prior to any construction beginning.

A completed joint use agreement must be presented to the Board for their review and approval prior to any design for a Y on School District property. The Superintendent will review the proposed agreement with the District Finance Advisory Committee prior to the review of the Board."

Board Chair Nelson opened the motion for discussion.

Quinnell offered an amendment (#6 to the motion) that the YMCA would pay all attorney fees associated with negotiating a joint use agreement with the Y. The amendment failed for a lack of a second.

Board members thanked the community for being engaged in the discussion.

Comments by Board members included:

- The decision facing the School Board was not about whether there should be a YMCA in the community. It was a decision about the location of the YMCA facility on School District property. The School District values the work of the Northfield Area YMCA in the community.

- During this time of reduced resources, the School District needs to be open to looking at developing partnerships within the community, which could result in solving multiple problems. A partnership with the Y should be seen as a positive, not a negative. The YMCA has a track record of successful partnerships with school districts in other communities. This collaboration would bring something to our students that the School District currently can't do. If the Y were to build on the High School campus, there would be an immediate tangible benefit – a 45,000 square foot building at no cost to the District with a flexible learning environment.
- The School Board and the District value and support collaboration, and anticipate and encourage continued collaborative programming with the YMCA and others in the community. Successful collaboration occurs when organizations with identified needs come together to mutually develop a joint solution to address those needs. In the case of the YMCA's facility proposal, the plan was developed by the YMCA and then presented to the School District as an opportunity to collaborate. According to Board members who did not support the resolution, the reasons for collaboration were not compelling and did not address high school building security and significant special education space needs.
- The proposed location of the YMCA facility on the high school property raised more concerns about the impact of the decision to build on the campus. The high school would be land-locked, limiting any needed expansion in the future; the location of the YMCA facility would reduce the amount of green space on the campus; and the sustainability of the YMCA in future years is unsure and failure would result in the School District paying to operate and maintain a building not designed to meet the most pressing needs of the District.
- Additional issues included increased traffic resulting in safety concerns; maintaining the appropriate separation of church and state; not having a large enough percentage of capital funds on hand prior to construction; and a fear that focusing on short-term gains could compromise long-term opportunities.

On a roll call vote, the motion was defeated 5 to 2. Voting 'yes' was Berthelsen and Iverson. Voting 'no' was Maple, Pritchard, Quinnell, Stratmoen and Nelson.

2. Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) Foundation Grant for Student Participation.  
On a motion by Pritchard, seconded by Quinnell, the Board unanimously approved the following Resolution.  
RESOLVED, that the School Board of Independent School District No. 659, authorizes the Northfield High School administration to apply for a Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) Foundation Grant to be used to fund those students unable to pay the activity fees to participate in Northfield High School Athletic Programs. The grant request is for \$10,000.
- B. Items for Consent Grouping
- On a motion by Iverson, seconded by Stratmoen, the Board unanimously approved the following items listed under the Consent Grouping.
1. Creation of an Indian Education Parent Committee.  
The Board approved the establishment of an Indian Education Parent Committee to be in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.78, which requires that school districts that enroll ten or more American Indian students must establish a parent committee. The Northfield Public Schools has eleven American Indian students.
  2. Professional Services Contracts.  
The Board approved a Professional Services Contract with Beth Berry and Susan Sanderson to execute the TORCH grant received by the District from the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation. Ms. Berry's contract is a 12-month contract beginning September 1, 2010 and ending August 31, 2011. Ms. Sanderson's contract is a 10-month contract beginning September 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2011.

3. Personnel Items.

a. Appointments\*

1. Jason Hallen, Instructional Educational Assistant, 3 hrs./day at the High School, beginning 10/18/10 through 6/10/11, Class II, step 1, \$12.85/hr.
2. Emily Waage, Long-term Substitute Grade 3 Compañeros Teacher at Bridgewater, beginning on or about 1/18/11 through 5/13/11, BA-0.
3. Marilyn Frey, Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA, 4.5 hrs./day at the Middle School, beginning 10/25/10 through 6/10/11, Class III, step 1, \$13.26/hr. (*This is in addition to her 3 hrs./day PCA position at Sibley*).
4. Blayr Gilitiuk, PLUS Site Leader at Greenvale Park, 8 hrs./week, beginning 10/25/10 through 4/28/11, step 1, \$13.74/hr.
5. Ed Kane, PT Assistant Middle School Wrestling Coach, beginning 11/2/10, \$14.00/hr.
6. Sarah Martens, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade PT Girls Basketball Coach, beginning 11/15/10, \$14.00/hr.
7. David Beck, Head Nordic Ski Coach, beginning 11/15/10, Level D, step 1.
8. Kate Godwin, Assistant Nordic Ski Coach, beginning 11/15/10, Level G, step 1.
9. Adam Carpenter, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Basketball Coach – Session I, beginning 10/25/10, \$10.00/hr.
10. Davonte Jacobs, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Basketball Coach – Session I, beginning 11/15/10, \$10.00/hr.
11. Alexis Bloch, PLUS Site Assistant at Greenvale Park, 2 hrs./day Mon.-Thurs., beginning 10/25/10 through 4/28/11, Step 1, \$11.03/hr.

b. Leaves of Absence

1. Jenny Streefland, was granted a FMLA childcare leave of absence, beginning on or about 2/4/11 through 5/2/11.
2. Jan Ensrud, was granted a FMLA childcare leave of absence, beginning on or about 2/22/11 for twelve work weeks.

c. Increase/Decrease/Change in Position

1. Kathleen Malecha, 2 hrs./day Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA, increase to 3.5 hrs./day beginning 10/25/10 through 12/4/10.
2. Kelly Foster, 2 hrs./day Educational Assistant/1 hr./day Child Nutrition Associate I at Longfellow/ALC, increase up to 10 hrs./week as a Site Leader for PLUS program at Sibley, beginning 10/25/10 through 4/28/10, Step 1, \$13.74/hr.
3. Amanda Schrader, ESL Teacher at Sibley, additional 5 hrs./week as Targeted Services Teacher at Sibley, beginning 10/25/10 through 4/28/10, \$26.52/hr.
4. Brenda Hand, ESL Teacher at Bridgewater, additional 2.5 hrs./week as Targeted Services Teacher at Bridgewater, beginning 10/25/10 through 4/28/10, \$25.93/hr.
5. Christa Anderson, Kindergarten Teacher at Bridgewater, additional 2.5 hrs./week as Targeted Services Teacher at Bridgewater, beginning 10/25/10 through 4/28/10, \$26.52/hr.
6. Elizabeth Valentine, ESL Teacher at Greenvale, additional 5 hrs./week as Targeted Services Teacher at Greenvale, beginning 10/25/10 through 4/28/10, \$26.52/hr.
7. Robert Garcia, Grade 4 Teacher at Greenvale, additional 5 hrs./week as Targeted Services Teacher at Greenvale, beginning 10/25/10 through 4/28/10, \$25.93/hr.
8. Kristin Basinger, 7.25 hrs./day Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA, increase 3.75 hrs./week as PLUS Site Lead, Step 4, \$14.89/hr.
9. Bonnie Klamm, .25 hr./day Supervisory/6.75 hrs./day Special Ed Educational Assistant PCA at Sibley, increase 5 hrs./week as PLUS Site Assistant at Sibley, Step 4, \$11.91/hr.

d. Resignation

1. Kathy Bussert-Pleschourt, Special Ed Educational Assistant at the High School, resignation effective 11/5/10.

4. Additional Co-Curricular Overnight Trip.

The Board approved a volleyball overnight trip on Friday, November 12, 2010 in St. Paul while the Varsity, JV and B teams are attending the state volleyball tournament.

5. Gift Agreement.

The Sibley PTO has donated \$295 to Sibley Elementary School to be used to purchase calendar magnets.

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

VIII. Items for Information

1. Upcoming Safety Drills.

The Board was told that during the week of October 25, all buildings will be conducting safety drills, specifically stay put and duck and cover lockdown drills. Five of each is required during the school year.

2. Gifted and Talented Youth Week Proclamation.

Governor Tim Pawlenty proclaimed October 30 through November 6 Gifted and Talented Youth Week.

IX. Future Meetings

Monday, November 8, 2010, 7:00 PM, Regular School Board meeting, Northfield High School Media Center  
Monday, November 22, 2010, 7:00 PM, Regular School Board meeting, Northfield High School Media Center

X. On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Stratmoen, the Board adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Ellen Iverson, School Board Clerk