

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
525 SUNSET RIDGE ROAD  
NORTHFIELD, ILLINOIS 60093  
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
September 15, 2020  
7:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**ROLL CALL: (7:01 p.m.)**

Mr. Spaan called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and upon roll call, the following were present:

Present: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes  
Mr. Subeck, Mrs. Peterson, Mr. Welch

Absent: Ms. Alpert Knight  
Also Present: Dr. Stange, Mr. Beerheide, Dr. Sukenik,  
Mts. Kiedaisch, Mrs. Styczen, Mr. Dreher, Ms. Dunham,  
19 Virtual Participants

**VOTE TO ALLOW  
VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION:**

Mr. Spaan moved to approve the virtual participation of Ms. Alpert Knight due to a business conflict. Mrs. Peterson second the motion. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Welch,  
Mr. Subeck, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: Ms. Alpert-Knight

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Mr. Spaan moved to approve the consent agenda and Mrs. Peterson second the motion. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Welch,  
Ms. Alpert Knight, Mr. Subeck, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: None

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Dr. Stange shared a note from Middlefork Teacher Mrs. Rachel Berkhof thanking the Board for its recognition of her 25 years of service to District 29. Dr. Stange also thanked the Board, staff, and community for their understanding during a challenging period for him and his family.

**OLD BUSINESS**

No business was discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**5.1 Audience Comments**

There were no audience comments.

**5.2 Board Open Discussion**

Mr. Spaan asked the Board to review the documents from the self-evaluation workshop in order to understand potential areas for growth. Next steps will include discussing how best to

implement the suggestions for improvement that came out of the session. Board member Mrs. Nancy Detlefsen thanked the teachers, staff, and administration for the endless effort they have put forth in order to make our in-person and remote school attempt successful. Juggling the in-person and remote duties simultaneously requires an enormous effort under extremely difficult circumstances, and District 29 has certainly risen to the occasion. Board member Mr. Rory Welch explained the challenges associated with running virtual Board meetings, and is happy to be assisting the tech department as they look into streaming options.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The Board discussed how best to organize and store our online resources, including Board packets and accompanying documents, agreeing to look further into various software packages to facilitate that. The Board discussed adding a “Strategic Dashboard” to the district website, which was one of the ideas that came out of the Board’s self-evaluation. This dashboard might include the District’s mission, beliefs, and core information, quantitative indicators of the District’s success, and Strategic Plan goals and their progress toward completion. The Board discussed the next Strategic Planning process, agreeing that planning should start during the 2021-2022 school year.

**REPORTS:**

**6.1 Finance and Facilities Committee Report**

Mr. Subeck moved to open the Public Hearing regarding the FY21 Budget and Mrs. Peterson seconded the motion. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Welch,  
Ms. Alpert Knight, Mr. Subeck, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: None

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

After no comments were made, Mr. Subeck moved to close the Public Hearing regarding the FY21 Budget and Mrs. Detlefsen seconded the motion. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Welch,  
Ms. Alpert Knight, Mr. Subeck, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: None

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

Mr. Subeck moved to approve the FY21 Budget as presented and Mr. Hayes seconded the motion. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Welch,  
Ms. Alpert Knight, Mr. Subeck, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: None

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

Additionally, the Board discussed the Compensation Reports that are posted on the District's website within six business days after the budget is officially approved, as required by law. The next meeting is October 13, 2020, at 6pm.

#### **6.2 Education Committee Report**

Board member Mrs. Anne Peterson reported that Director of Technology and Innovation Mrs. Sheri Styzcen and Network Data and Security Manager Mr. Brian Thiel walked the Board through the recent technology security audit, which was done in order to understand where our weaknesses are and how we can improve in areas such as security training, on-site security, device management, platforms, network security, and data monitoring. The next meeting is November 10, 2020, at 6pm.

#### **6.3 Policy Committee Report**

Board member Mr. Welch reported that the committee has completed its review of all of the District's policies, bringing them all up to date. Moving forward meetings will take place quarterly. Both Mr. Welch and Mr. Spaan thanked the members for their hard work. The next meeting is January 5, 2020..

#### **6.4 Return to School Task Force**

Dr. Stange reviewed the metrics by which the Task Force makes its decisions to move forward or backward a stage, commenting on how fortunate we are to have access to some of the best medical experts in their fields as we make those decisions. One metric that we use is the School Learning Environment Matrix, measuring regional and local positivity rates, our ability to handle and rate of teacher absences, PPE supplies, and student behavioral data. This metric has revealed that our staffing is fragile and we must do what we can to relieve the pressure teachers and staff are experiencing. In order to achieve this, the Task Force recommended implementing the following practices:

- Allowing students who are quarantining for medical reasons to participate in remote learning. Students whose families choose to travel to a high-risk state as named by the CCDPH, and are observing the required days of quarantine upon their return, shall not participate in remote learning. Rather, they will be counted as absent. This is to lessen the disruption caused by students bouncing in and out of remote learning, which affects both the in-person and remote learning environment for students and teachers
- Observing a non-student attendance day on September 25<sup>th</sup>, freeing up time for teachers and staff to regroup and catch up
- Allowing the District to remain at Stage 2, rather than move ahead to Stage 3 that would include serving lunch

The Task Force also recommended the District consider the following as we move forward:

- The possibility of going fully remote from Thanksgiving to New Years as a way to allow families to gather across state lines without putting our school community at greater risk
- Study the potential impact of taking one hour off the school day in order to relieve some of the pressure from teachers
- Review expectations for all students who participate in remote learning at any time of the day

Both school principals have met with the Alternate Remote Learner families in order to get feedback on how the experience can be improved. A survey will be sent to all families to gauge progress and satisfaction in both the in-person and remote learning environments.

Some challenges in the classrooms that we have encountered include:

- Understanding how best to use our technology to provide the most productive experience
- Effectively interacting with both remote and in-person students at the same time
- Redesigning the curriculum to fit this new and ever-changing teaching model
- Managing the use of physical materials in the classroom
- Redirecting remote students who are having trouble focusing

Our priorities right now are to find ways to alleviate the high amounts of stress that teachers and staff are experiencing as they do their utmost to make this experience work, and to communicate to families that their dedication and investment is integral to the success of our program.

## **6.5 External Relations**

### **6.5a IASB**

Dr. Stange reminded the Board of their mandatory online training requirements.

### **6.5b PTO**

Board member Mrs. Anne Peterson reported that they have filled all of the room parent positions, and are planning to sprinkle in teacher and staff appreciation throughout the year. They are considering options regarding fundraising, and hope to host an in-person benefit next year.

### **6.5c NSSED**

Board member Mr. Bill Hayes reported they have now shifted to a hybrid learning schedule, and it seems to be going well. They continue to analyze their classroom space needs.

### **6.5d Northfield Park District**

Board member Mr. Welch reported that their after-care program is running smoothly with 15-16 kids enrolled. The Clarkson Park renovation project has started and will be wrapping up in the spring.

**6.5e Village of Northfield**

There was no report.

**6.5f Foundation Fund**

There was no report.

**6.6 Administrative Reports**

**6.6a FOIA Requests**

The District received one FOIA this month regarding purchasing records.

**6.6b Enrollment Update**

Dr. Stange reported that enrollment remains steady, with 14% of students participating remotely.

**6.6c Staffing Update**

Dr. Stange reported that the District is currently advertising for three available teaching assistant position and that there is difficulty filling vacant positions.

**6.6d Respiratory Protection Plan**

Dr. Stange reported on the new District 29 Respiratory Protection Plan training that IL districts are required to implement for any staff that must wear an N95 mask. This includes nurses, custodial staff, and some special education staff.

**6.6e District/School Reports**

Middlefork Principal Mrs. Jen Kiedaisch noted Club Dolphin is going strong. Middlefork is going through their emergency drills, starting with lockdown drills in small groups. MAP testing was finished, and reading assessments have begun.

Sunset Ridge Principal Dr. Ivy Sukenik noted that fire drills were done one class at a time. Teachers are using “The Distance Learning Playbook” as a helpful guide moving forward, and we hope to provide a similar resource to parents/guardians as well.

Traffic is going smoothly, and the staggered start times have provided a general overall improvement in parking lot safety. Director of Student Services Ms. Emily Dunham reported that student services assessments are taking place as scheduled. The team is working to collect data on any occurrence of “academic COVID slide” as a result of last year’s closure. The ability to adequately staff TAs is concerning. Special Education teachers are meeting with students during the afternoon. This requires extra flexibility from our Exploratory teachers, for which we are grateful. Director Technology, Mrs. Sheri Styczen reported that the team is doing their absolute best to support teachers and students every day with whatever they need to be successful. Director of Buildings and Grounds Mr. Corey Dreher reported that there are still two night custodial positions to be filled at Middlefork.

**CLOSED SESSION:** At 9:07 p.m. it was moved by Mr. Subeck and seconded by Mr. Hayes that the Board enter into closed session to discuss the closed session minutes of the August 18, 2020 Board meetings; to consider information regarding employment, compensation, discipline, or dismissal of specific employees or legal counsel; to discuss the placement of individuals in special education programs or matters related to individual students; and to discuss potential litigation. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Ms. Alpert Knight,  
Mr. Subeck, Mr. Welch, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: None

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

**RESUMPTION OF  
OPEN MEETING:**

Upon resumption of the open meeting at 9:20 p.m., the following recommendations were made:

**10.1 Approval: Closed Session Minutes – August 18, 2020**

Mr. Welch moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mrs. Detlefsen seconded the motion. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Ms. Alpert  
Knight, Mr. Subeck, Mr. Welch, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: None

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

**10.2 Approval: Employment of Sean Hardiman**

Mr. Hayes moved to approve the request as presented. Mrs. Detlefsen seconded the motion. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Ms. Alpert  
Knight, Mr. Subeck, Mr. Welch, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: None

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

**10.3 Approval: Employment of Michele Gidron**

Mr. Welch moved to approve the request as presented. Mrs. Detlefsen seconded the motion. The Board voted as follows:

Aye: Mrs. Detlefsen, Mr. Spaan, Mr. Hayes, Ms. Alpert  
Knight, Mr. Subeck, Mr. Welch, Mrs. Peterson

Absent: None

Nay: None

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED

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ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Mr. Hayes seconded by Mrs. Detlefsen to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m. All were in favor.

  
President, Board of Education

Vice President, Board of Education  
(In absence of Board President)

  
Secretary, Board of Education

Approved 13 October, 2020

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