

## **BOARD NOTES:**

### **September 10, 2019, Regular Board Meeting:**

**Consent Agenda:** After a question regarding NSSD's billing schedule, the Board approved the Consent Agenda, which included the minutes from the August 13<sup>th</sup> Regular Board Meeting and the monthly bills and salaries.

**Communications:** Superintendent Dr. Ed Stange referred to Chicago Magazine's annual ranking of suburban Cook County's public elementary and middle schools, in which Middlefork and Sunset Ridge were ranked 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> respectively. Dr. Stange shared thank-you notes from several staff members whose work anniversaries were celebrated at the staff luncheon that took place in August. Also shared was a note of appreciation from teachers and staff for the Board's support during a challenging first week of school.

#### **Capital Improvement:**

**Middlefork School:** The library was opened for Middlefork students in grand style and they were thrilled! Some punch list items remain, which will be addressed during non-school hours when possible. Dr. Stange reported that Wight & Co has offered to subtract 10% off the cost of the additional plumbing work and the sliding door header installation that they mistakenly left off the original plans. All in all, the library renovation went approximately \$10K over budget. Now that the project has been completed, the District has a chance to identify and evaluate other, if any, facility needs the building has, how to prioritize them, and how to engage families in that process.

**Sunset Ridge School:** The final drawings regarding the water main vault located underneath the parking lot have been received from Wight & Co, as has the insurance policy from Lenny Hoffman Excavating covering any repair or damages incurred due to the vault's incorrect placement. That information has been sent to the Village of Northfield for their review.

#### **Board Policy Revisions:**

**The Board had a second reading of and approved these policies:**

- 710.06 (Student Conduct)
- 710.07 (Student Appearance)
- 200 (Board Legal Status)
- 200.03 (Board Qualifications)
- 203 (Board Uniform Grievance Procedure)
- 236 (Board Communications)
- 240 (Board Conflict of Interest)

**The Board tabled these policies for further review:**

- 230.01 (Unexpired Board Term)
- 235 (Board Code of Conduct)
- 237 (Board Self-Evaluation)

**The Board had a first reading of these policies:**

- 520.02 (Hiring Process)
- 625.21 (Avoidance of Abduction and Abuse)
- 241.05 (Board Gift Ban)
- 245 (Board Officers)
- 245.01 (Board President)
- 245.02 (Board Vice President)
- 245.03 (Board Secretary)
- 245.04 (Board Treasurer)

246 (Board Recording Secretary)

247 (Board Representations/Liaisons)

**Old Business:** The Board discussed the option of participating in a Board self-evaluation. Board member Mr. Adelbert Spaan agreed to collect more information on the process.

**Audience Comments:** Community member Mrs. Jackie Pick addressed the Board regarding the Sunset Ridge club PRISM, expressing her endorsement of this opportunity for students to learn from and support each other with respect to LGBTQ issues, presenting statistical evidence of the need for this type of support in pre-adolescent children, and communicating her appreciation for the District's allowance of this student-led club.

**Board Open Discussion:** Mr. Spaan commended the teachers and staff on their poise and perseverance during recent events surrounding Mr. George Gemeinhardt's arrest. The Board discussed conducting a review of our current hiring and supervision procedures. Dr. Stange agreed to collect information in order to further the conversation, and will provide a report before the end of the calendar year.

**Finance and Facilities:** The Board opened a public hearing, as required by law, in order to approve the final FY 2020 budget. After no public comments were offered, the hearing was closed and the budget was approved. The next meeting is October 15, 2019, at 6pm.

**Education Committee:** Board member Mrs. Anne Peterson reported that Dr. Stange had provided a deep dive into District data, which included IAR, MAP, IL 5 Essentials, and the New Trier High School Freshman survey results. The next meeting is November 12, 2019, at 6pm.

**IASB:** Dr. Stange asked that if any Board members would like to attend the IL Joint Annual Conference they should let him know.

**PTO:** Mrs. Peterson reported that they are still working on collecting dues and filling lunchroom volunteer spots. Approximately 94% of district families participated in the school kits program. Upcoming events include the New Family Ice Cream Social, the Book Fair to be held at Middlefork, and Sunset Ridge's first author visit in just a couple weeks. Mrs. Peterson also reported that both Chief Lustig and Dr. Stange spoke at the meeting regarding the recent arrest of Mr. Gemeinhardt, which was appreciated by the attendees.

**NSSD:** Board member Mr. Bill Hayes reported that they are continuing their review of program financing, and are reaching out for input from member districts. They are also seeking outside leadership to guide their financial reflections. They have a new information system for collecting student data, and are looking into rebranding possibilities, including changing their name.

**Northfield Park District:** Board member Mr. Rory Welch reported that their proposal for a bandshell installation at Clarkson Park was rejected by Northfield's Architectural Commission. They still plan to present their drawings at the upcoming Village meeting.

**Village of Northfield:** Board member Mrs. Nancy Detlefsen reported that the District's 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Committee is exploring plans to host the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation party in a tent on school grounds. The discussion of the proposed bike path is ongoing. A long-term Library plan is coming out next week. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan process is wrapping up and will be presented soon to the Village committees.

**Foundation Fund:** No report.

**Administrative Reports:** Dr. Stange reported that there was one FOIA request from The Northbrook Patch requesting information regarding Mr. Gemeinhardt's employment and resignation. Enrollment is holding steady at 201 at Middlefork and 260 at Sunset Ridge, for a total enrollment of 461 students. The Board reviewed the

FY 2020 Compensation Reports, which will be posted on the website as required by law. Dr. Stange reported that the District is still looking to fill one Teaching Assistant position, mentioning how challenging it is to find good candidates. The Board discussed the concessions that SMP (Sports Made Personal) agreed to concerning their proposal to rent Sunset Ridge's athletic fields. However, the Board continues to find the terms of the agreement disagreeable. Dr. Stange said he would convey the Board's position to SMP. Dr. Stange provided a brief update on the 2019-2020 District 29 Strategic Plan Goals, highlighting the focus on a) the implementation of new curriculum in English/Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science b) a comprehensive review of special education services and supports, c) a review of the District's disciplinary policies and procedures, d) professional development supports for staff and, e) the financial management of the District.

**Middlefork School:** Principal Dr. Mary Frances Greene reported that the Library opening ceremony was a fun event for the students. Their reactions were priceless! The back-to-school-packet was sent to families, which had been redesigned in order to not be repetitive. Staff and families alike are getting used to the new entryway, but so far so good. The NSSED classroom is going very well so far, with 2 students enrolled. Spanish, now taught from a cart in individual classrooms rather than a specified room, is working through the transition.

**Sunset Ridge School:** Principal Dr. Ivy Sukenik reported that students received an overview of available clubs. Soccer has started, but, unfortunately, field hockey was not able to field a team due to lack of players and a coach. Dr. Sukenik commented that dwindling interest in field hockey seems to be a township-wide trend. New Exploratory classes include Civil Discourse, which every 7<sup>th</sup> grader will take at some time over the year, and Debate, which every 8<sup>th</sup> grader will take. Service Leagues will have their kick-off on Wednesday, with students able to have more input into their field trip destinations. Dr. Sukenik noted that there is a nationwide movement to make September 11<sup>th</sup> a day of service, which Sunset Ridge plans to embrace in addition to Martin Luther King, Jr Day.

**Recommendations:** The Board approved the Closed Session Minutes of August 13, 2019, and accepted the resignation of Teaching Assistant Traci Weiss. Also approved was the employment of Teaching Assistants Katherine Augustin, Nisa Fayyaz, Jessica Speck, Liam Kirwan, Christina Phillips, Stephanie Gelber, Deepa Saraiya, and Delma Mancio, and the Request for Maternity Leave for Mrs. Kristen Gonzales.

Official meeting minutes will be posted on the website following their approval at the October 15, 2019, Regular Board meeting.