

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
August 22, 2022  
New Trier Township High School  
7 Happ Road, Room C234  
Northfield, IL 60093**

A **Regular Meeting** of the Board of Education of New Trier Township High School District 203, Cook County, Illinois was held at New Trier High School – Northfield Campus, 7 Happ Road, in Room C234 on Monday, August 22, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

**Members Present**

Ms. Cathy Albrecht  
Ms. Kimberly Alcantara  
Mr. Avik Das  
Mr. Keith Dronen, President  
Ms. Jean Hahn, Vice President  
Mr. Brad McLane  
Ms. Sally Tomlinson

**Administrators Present**

Dr. Paul Sally, Superintendent  
Mr. Christopher Johnson, Associate Superintendent  
Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Asst. Supt. for Special Ed and Student Services  
Mr. Peter Tragos, Asst. Supt. for Curriculum & Instruction  
Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal – Winnetka Campus  
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

**Also Present**

Mr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer; Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Athena Arvanitis, Assistant Principal for Student Services and Operations; Ms. Teri Rodgers, Social Studies Department Faculty and Education Association President; Mr. Jon Lepeska, Math Department Faculty; Mr. Eric Johnson, Technology Department; Mr. Jeff Bailey, Technology Department; Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary; members of the press and community.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER – 5:15 p.m. – C234**

Mr. Dronen called the Regular Meeting of August 22, 2022 of the Board of Education to order at 5:15 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

Mr. Dronen asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Mr. Das moved that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session for the purpose of collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District; security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property; the placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students; and litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes. Ms. Hahn seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht, Mr. Dronen

NAY: none

The motion passed.

**II. CLOSED SESSION – 5:15 p.m. – A201A**

**III. BUSINESS MEETING – Open Session – 6:30 p.m. – C234**

Mr. Dronen recalled the Regular Meeting of August 22, 2022 of the Board of Education to order at 6:38 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

#### IV. Minutes and Reports

##### A. Regular Meeting of July 11, 2022 (open and closed session)

Mr. Dronen asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 11, 2022 (open and closed session). There were no requests for changes to the minutes. Ms. Hahn moved, and Ms. Alcantara seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 11, 2022 (open and closed session). Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen

NAY: none

The motion passed.

##### B. Report from Campus Principals and FOIA Report

Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal for the Northfield Campus, shared the following student events and program updates from that campus:

- He welcomed the Board to the beginning of another school year as today was the first day of student attendance. He noted it was great to have staff back.
- Last week, Transfer families attended a meeting hosted by the New Trier Parents Association (NTPA). Mr. Waechtler presented to the parents as well as answered their questions, while Student Ambassadors and former Transfer students gave tours and led activities for new students.
- Mr. Waechtler shared that the Class of 2026 was welcomed by faculty and staff with decorations and music.
- Students spent time in their Adviser Rooms getting to know one another. Mr. Waechtler displayed a picture of Social Work Department Coordinator, Mr. Dan Paustian's, mixed gender adviser room. This is the first year for the mixed gender adviser room.
- Students attended an assembly, where there was a drumline as they entered the gym. A class photo was taken, and senior helpers taught them cheers.
- Lunch was provided and then students went through their schedules with shortened classes.
- Mr. Waechtler thanked Ms. Gail Gamrath, Northfield Campus Assistant Principal, for all her efforts, the NTPA for decorations and handing out t-shirts, the Booster club for buying the t-shirts, advisers for spending the entire morning with their adviser rooms as well as staff for greeting students and working with them all day so they had a great start.

Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal for Winnetka Campus, shared the following student events and program updates from that campus:

- She began by echoing some of Mr. Waechtler's comments from the Transfer families' day. She noted the success of the day and how it has evolved over the years. Students in the Newbies club reach out to the new students while parents who have transferred their families in recent years to reach out to the parents. The NTPA is instrumental in this day. Student Ambassadors, which are sponsored by Ms. Ashley Rasch, Mrs. Dubravec's administrative assistant, provided tours. Next week, students will have a welcome breakfast and it will be an opportunity to see how the first week went. Students were also matched with others who have the same lunch period. On September 6<sup>th</sup>, Mrs. Dubravec will host an evening with the transfer families. During this time, Ms. Monique Boyd, Art Department Faculty, will do a demonstration of glass blowing in the glass art room.
- Mrs. Dubravec congratulated Mr. Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, on a successful Opening Institute Day for staff. She noted that part of the day was used for extracurricular professional development. All programs such as athletics, performing arts and clubs attended. The focus was on creating a positive culture and experience for all students. Mrs. Dubravec went on to share additional details, including a new logo, Be Brave, Be Kind, Be Proud, which stems from the District's Restorative Practice work. Discussion will continue as to how to promote the culture that is being set. A survey will also be distributed at the end of the school year to gather feedback on how students are experiencing extracurriculars.
- In August, we held a professional development session on Restorative Practices with guest presenter Mr. Kelvin Oliver. Those in attendance included the administrative team, adviser chairs, extracurricular leaders, and Ms. Hahn. The morning session was an overview of the school-wide structure of Restorative Practices. Some approaches would not work well within New Trier's structure, so the afternoon session reviewed the District's current discipline practices and focused on what we should be thinking about as we begin to identify how Restorative Practices will be implemented at New Trier. Implementation is complex, yet

exciting and will take time to establish a plan. There will be another event in September and the school will continue to work with Mr. Oliver throughout the year.

- Mrs. Dubravec shared a picture from the first day where security staff member, Mr. Johnny Owens, is greetings student with a fist bump as they enter school. She felt this picture showed what the school always speaks about which is that relationships matter.
- Sophomores began their day as the only ones in the building for the first hour which allowed them to orient themselves and then juniors and seniors joined them. The day focused on building relationships.
- Mr. Eric Duffett, Business Education Department Faculty, who created the New Trier Block Schedule app, has also created the Club Finder app, which allows students to find a club that interests them. The Club Fair is September 13<sup>th</sup> during the lunch periods.
- Mrs. Dubravec then shared information on the NT Block Schedule app. Students can toggle between campuses, access Canvas, as well as have their personal page and calendar. Students are now able to also personalize their schedules. They can see their daily schedule, their overall schedule as well as have a calendar view.
- Mrs. Dubravec thanked IT for their work in helping students understand how to read their schedule, while Ms. Dizon, Director of Communications, compiled all back-to-school information for parents on the website.
- Lastly, Mrs. Dubravec shared steps being taken to support student mental health. Not only for their transition back-to-school, but also due to what has been going on across the country as well as locally in Highland Park. There are two upcoming programs, the first is on September 12<sup>th</sup> with Dr. Nancy Burgoyne and Dr. Smita Gutam, entitled *“Supporting Youth Mental Health During Uncertainty: What Parents and Educators Should Know & How They Can Help.”* The second event is with Ms. Lisa Damour, who has previously presented at New Trier, and wrote the book, *“Untangled.”* She will present separately to students, staff, and parents and will focus on managing conflict, stress and where students are at regarding the aftermath of covid.

Mr. Tragos thanked Mrs. Dubravec and Mr. Waechtler for the work they and their teams did over the summer to get ready for the first day of school. He then went on to share about the national teacher shortage and referenced an August 4<sup>th</sup> article in the Washington Post. It is difficult to know how many classrooms are short of teachers in the 2022-2023 school year, partly because there is not a national database that tracks this information. Numbers are cobbled together with state and district level data. The estimate is that 36,000 classrooms do not have a full-time teacher. That number can then be extrapolated to the number of children who are without full-time teachers or highly qualified teachers. There are many reasons as to why teachers are leaving or not entering the profession thus having a real impact on schools, children, and communities. Mr. Tragos provided graphics to put this into context, with one showing that, as of last week, Florida had 9,000 vacancies. He also shared locally, noting that Chicago Public Schools has just over 1,000 vacancies. These numbers only pertain to certified staff, there are many more vacancies for support staff. Mr. Tragos shared that New Trier has done good work to get ahead of this, he then introduced Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources, noting that the District was fully staffed on the faculty side by the middle of June.

Dr. Zoladz noted that New Trier welcomed 20 new faculty members with a wide variety of experiences and backgrounds. The District has also hired 25 new support staff members across various departments who are valued for their contributions at every level. The District is experiencing a bit of a shortage in terms of hiring instructional assistants. In previous years, certified teachers would fill these positions until they were able to obtain a teaching position, but now, teachers are being hired right after they graduate. Although, when looking at openings, the District is about the same overall. Shortages have also taken place elsewhere with substitutes, but New Trier had a successful substitute orientation this year. There are currently 106 substitute teachers on the District’s roster, with another 50 signed up for the next orientation in September. These substitutes are licensed teachers or fully licensed subs.

Overall, the District is on the path to achieving its strategic goal to recruit, develop and retain a diverse and exceptional staff who put students at the center of learning and contribute to a collaborative culture. The District has attended both in-person and virtual job fairs. Dr. Zoladz planned, with department chairs, to complete hard-to-fill positions first. These included hands-on classes that students were not able to take during covid. Dr. Zoladz worked with Applied Arts Department Chair, Mr. Jason Boumstein, and the Science Department Chair, Mr. Jason English, to fill those positions first as there would be competition from other area high schools for those candidates.

Beyond recruiting and hiring, developing, and retaining is also a key part of an excellent staff. A new support staff orientation program has been created in collaboration with the support staff association. The District has also

provided ongoing professional development through increased tuition reimbursement programs. Dr. Zoladz noted that many instructional assistants are in school to become teachers. The District is encouraging those who are great with kids and have the skill set to pursue this path to utilize the tuition reimbursement program. The District is also offering additional professional development opportunities.

Next, Mr. Tragos shared about the upgraded new teaching induction and mentoring program for faculty. Significant time and resources are committed to the four-year new teacher induction program. This includes all teachers who are new to New Trier, regardless of their teaching experience. Dr. Chimille Tillery, Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Dr. Aileen Heidkamp, Staff Development Coordinator, have worked to re-envision a mentorship program in which veteran teachers mentor new teachers. A researched-based program has been implemented with new teachers having the same mentor for the first two years and a different one for the final two years.

Finally, Mr. Tragos spoke to leaders creating a climate for new staff to thrive. He notes that the District is in a transition period and will continue to hire new staff over the next several years. Faculty and administrators worked this summer to identify the qualities New Trier should possess to be an ideal place for its new teachers. The next step is to identify what must be done and the ways the school act to intentionally create this climate.

Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services, shared about the Transition Center, which is now open in Glencoe. Students and their families were able to tour the space last Friday. Today, students and faculty were able to do activities to get acclimated to the new space and build relationships with one another.

Mr. Johnson gave the FOIA report, noting that there were two requests since the last Board meeting, and both are closed. One was regarding equity programs and the other was regarding postal equipment leases.

## **V. Communications**

Mr. Dronen invited anyone from the audience who wished to address the Board to come forward and fill out a yellow communications request form and give it Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. Mr. Dronen reminded those speaking to keep their comments to three minutes or less per Board Policy 2:230. He also asked that the audience refrain from clapping, or a response of any kind in regard to people's comments. There were five requests for public comment.

1. Ms. Lauren Harper, lead for Moms Demand Action, who represents 2,500 parents from the area, shared that their purpose is to advocate for sensible gun policy to keep communities safe. She then shared comments pertaining to teen suicide and gun safety. She also spoke to safely storing guns.
2. Ms. Layla Danley, community member, shared comments on secure gun storage and statistics on firearms.
3. Ms. Erinn Martin, community member and Moms Demand Action volunteer, shared comments about secure gun storage.
4. Ms. Gail Eisenberg, New Trier Township Supervisor, and mom of two future high school students, shared comments about safe gun storage.
5. Mr. Ken McNeil shared comments about the 11:32 initiative, whose objective is to create a movement toward the banning of assault weapons and large capacity magazines.

## **VI. Special Orders of Business**

Mr. Dronen noted that items A and B would be flipped, so the Safety and Security Report would be first.

### **B. Safety and Security Report**

Dr. Sally presented the report on Safety and Security. He began by thanking those who spoke to the Board. He shared opening comments noting that by providing information about the District's comprehensive approach the community can be ensured that students, staff, and building safety are a priority. He provided an overview of the layered approach we take. Physical security measures evolve as the District continually investigates best practices. The District has strong partnerships with law enforcement as well as social service agencies, who provide resources to students and the community. Prevention measures are important such as focusing on mental health and belonging which apply to both harm to self and harm to others.

Next, Dr. Sally stepped through the four layers of prevention, safety, and security. The first layer, and most important, is connection, support, and prevention. The other layers include community partners, physical safety measures and daily procedures and emergency procedures and readiness. The District's highest priority is building strong relationships. Creating a culture of belonging has been part of the Strategic Plan over the past few years to

ensure that every student feels like they belong at New Trier. This work is intentionally done by faculty and staff through the adviser program, extracurricular programs, clubs, and affinity groups. There are also extensive social work resources as well as other connections such as community partnerships. Dr. Sally shared further details about some of the support offered. Next, Dr. Sally spoke about prevention in terms of harm to self or others, noting this is where the District puts a lot of its resources. It also continues to review our practices to ensure we are meeting students' needs. An important theme is "See Something, Say Something." TrevTips is available to students, parents, and others to let the school know about something going on so we can intervene as best as we can. There are also student groups who are interested in school safety and related issues. Another important piece is partnering with families which is done by facilitating access to community resources as well as providing parent programming. Dr. Sally shared that the District has strong relationships with the Winnetka and Northfield police and fire departments. The District also partners with security consultants who conduct periodic reviews while also providing research on new developments and best practices. Other community partners include community resources around mental health as well as those such as NTPA and Family Action Network (FAN) who assist the school in getting information out to families. The Family Institute at Northwestern University and The Josselyn Center helps the school work with students and develop programs for them. The school also refers families to Compass, Haven and private practices as well.

The next layer is physical safety measures and daily procedures. Dr. Sally shared that there are limited entry points at each campus which are staffed by the District's security personnel who receive extensive training. There is also door hardware that has a connected warning system on all unmanned doors. If one is left open, a text is sent so security staff can investigate. The District has other systems and procedures that are in place to ensure the buildings are safe, such as video surveillance in the hallways. Each campus has a school resource officer who is a member of the police department, which allows the District to access law enforcement resources. There is regular monitoring by administrators of the TrevTips online reporting. Dr. Sally clarified that tips are not continuously responded to, noting there are other resources to contact in an emergency. The school's threat assessment team follows protocols when issues emerge such as engaging with law enforcement and experts within the school.

The last layer is emergency procedures and readiness; drills are conducted with the police and fire departments. There is also an "emergency awareness day" coming up that will review procedures in each class. The campuses are used for law enforcement trainings and will include the new East Side Academic and Athletic space once its complete. The District also has the capability to communicate to staff, students and families via text and email.

Dr. Sally shared there are many resources available on the website with a variety of access points to information and resources. He stepped through portions of the website to demonstrate how to access the information and resources. He then went on to share part of the website that has information for the community to understand the District's comprehensive approach to mental health. Dr. Sally noted that pages are updated as needed. He highlighted the District's improved school safety page. The page includes many resources including information about safe gun storage, previous presentations, and general school safety information.

Dr. Sally shared final thoughts that knowing and treating students as individuals builds connections while also ensuring early intervention. He noted how important the adviser system is when it comes to this. He emphasized See Something, Say Something, and that continual communication with all the school's partners is essential. The District is well-prepared but is staying vigilant. Dr. Sally then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Hahn thanked those who spoke during public comments, noting that students' greatest resource is the community. After further comments, she noted that the vast majority of people are revolted by the gun violence in the country. She went on to share that throughout all the presentations on the campus reports, what resonated with her, was the intentionality of everything that is done at New Trier, that so much of it is focused on building relationships. She also noted her excitement for the restorative practices piece and its evolution. Her understanding of the issue, particularly of violence in schools, is that one of the most important things that can be done is to keep students feeling like they belong and are connected to New Trier, regardless of a mistake they have made, which is the purpose of restorative practices. Kids are supposed to make mistakes and it is the job of the adults to teach them and prepare them.

Ms. Hahn went on to speak about safety and the intentionality and continued development of that. Next, she noted the District's communications and webpage and referenced Dr. Sally's earlier comments about not knowing where someone may access the website in crisis. She inquired if there is any follow-up with a student who accesses support via the website and if it is an area that can be targeted for specific messaging. Dr. Sally did not know if that sort of

data is gathered such as where a student went on the website or what might have initiated a call or using TrevTips. Mrs. Dubravec added that that information could be gathered via the numerous systems that are in place and the people that are connected with the student. She shared additional details, noting that ultimately, the adviser is the connector to the various resources and support. Dr. Sally said that a lot of students are talking to a trusted adult, at times, though, the school does not know who is accessing the resources but having all of them available is important.

Ms. Alcantara referenced the website, in particular the presentations and safety links and inquired if it possible to feature those links and the link to the school safety section more prominently. Dr. Sally shared that he and Ms. Dizon spoke earlier about the same idea. School Safety and Security was moved to the homepage. Brief discussion ensued with Dr. Sally noting that the District has statistics on traffic to the website that are analyzed so that it is efficiently organized. Mr. McLane noted that when Googling or using the search feature on the website, this information does not show up. Ms. Alcantara added that it could be as simple as adding a link at the top of the page. She also noted it would be interesting to know how people are interacting and able to find items when they are looking for them on this topic. Ms. Dizon added that after a recent change, the Google search should updates within the next 24-48 hours and shared additional details around this topic. Ms. Alcantara shared that she was responding to feedback from the audience and that there are great links that speak to some of these issues. Dr. Sally replied that there are various places where these messages are shared while Ms. Alcantara reinforced that the approach to school and safety and the communications about it are multifaceted.

Ms. Albrecht shared an anecdote about her daughter's adviser room that exemplified the importance of belonging and making connections. She noted there were some significant events that happened in these girls' lives for which they went to their adviser. Ms. Albrecht noted it was one more piece of evidence that the structure of our Adviser program and having trained Advisers allows students to feel safe as a group. She added that advisers have the crisis intervention information and can refer students and families to those resources.

Mr. McLane noted he was not able to attend the Village of Winnetka meeting last week but submit in writing his point of view about where things stand with this. To Mr. McNeil and Moms Demand Action, Mr. McLane noted that the Board is listening, but he is also personally listening. He clarified that he submitted his comment not as a New Trier Board member, but rather as a member of the Village of Winnetka.

Mr. McLane then asked Dr. Sally to share how the parent programming will look. Dr. Sally replied that FAN is one of the school's resources it uses to bring speakers in as well as through Parent University. Mrs. Dubravec and Mr. Waechtler work with the parents' association to determine what the programming will be. This year, to start, the focus will be on mental health. Mrs. Dubravec added that with each group the needs of the school are discussed and went on to share additional details around this. Dr. Sally then added that the all-encompassing theme is mental health with more specific topics on parent-child relationships, suicide awareness and prevention, substance, and social media.

Ms. Tomlinson noted that these are all wonderful layers of preventative strategies and inquired as to what measurements the school is looking at to see what is working or not. Dr. Sally replied that the school looks at many students that may be having trouble academically, are seeing social work or something has changed and there is a process through which the school tracks them. Dr. Sally shared that it is not often that the school finds out about a student who is not doing well, and it did not know about them already. When these cases arise, it is a moment of reflection for the school. Dr. Panopoulos echoed Dr. Sally's thoughts, noting that with Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) the school is continually looking at ways to monitor students. She shared additional details, concluding that the school thinks about the level of supports provided as ways as to measure if those interventions are working or not. Ms. Tomlinson also mentioned that the post-high school survey also provides feedback. Dr. Sally added that there is the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey, which is given every other year, and will be given this year. Information gathered from this survey helps to direct the school. Dr. Sally also noted that the school does not see statistics that are all that different from the national ones regarding mental health or substance use. It was noted that the school also conducts a yearly climate survey. Mrs. Dubravec added that one item the school does well is to help students become self-advocates and shared an anecdote about this.

Mr. Das shared that he is trying to unpack the layered approach making sure to understand how these parts interplay as well as connecting to MTSS as part of the layer of connection and support. He also included the phrasing of "Be Brave, Be Kind, Be Proud" and "Many Voices, One New Trier." He noted that these are all themes of a climate belonging, and the concept of belonging is a key piece to community safety. The self-advocacy that is brought to the community, with students and adults-alike, Mr. Das thinks the school can move beyond the phrasing "harm to self or

others” to “caring for self, caring for others.” He believes this is a key prevention strategy and using the word “caring” because it sets up a self-advocacy climate and one’s role in caring for themselves and others. A person becomes a key participant in the school’s entire well-being. The infrastructure that New Trier has been setting up is a way to get one empowered to do both – care for themselves and care for others. All this then makes for a healthy and safe community. Mr. Das is appreciative of how this has been structured. Dr. Sally noted his appreciation for the shift in the phrase, “harm to self and others” to “care for self and others.” He went on to note that the proactive turn to caring for self and others plays directly into the District’s “Be Brave, Be Kind, Be Proud.” Mrs. Dubravec added that one of the indicators of “Be Kind” is how does one treat others and themselves with care and compassion.

Mr. Dronen thanked the speakers for their insightful and thoughtful comments. He also thanked them for addressing and elevating the issue of gun violence for the community.

#### **A. 2022-2023 School Year Update**

Dr. Sally presented a brief update on the 2022-2023 school year beginning with the theme, *Many Voices, One New Trier*. This theme is meant to give space and honor a diversity of voices while being a collaborative environment that listens to one another. This is part of the District’s civil discourse and critical thinking. The focus for 2022-2023 will be on student mental health, student supports, culture of belonging, listening, critical thinking and civil discourse. The school will also focus on Restorative Practices, the Freshman Success program and the first year of mixed gender adviser grouping. Other items of focus include safety and security, finance, facilities, and research items. Teachers are also delivering rigorous curriculum as well as connecting with students.

Dr. Sally shared comments about the calendar and block schedule. He reminded everyone about the New Trier Block Schedule App. Anchor Days will be on Wednesdays most weeks and there will be Student Personalized Learning Time on those days. He also reminded everyone about exams taking place before Winter Break. He noted that looking at the structure for the 2023-2024 school year calendar is part of the Annual Plan and more will be shared later.

Regarding Covid, those who are sick should stay home and report cases to health services. Students must remain home for five days and are able to return after that if they do not have symptoms. Students must mask for an additional five days unless they can provide two negative tests. Students who become symptomatic at school should report to Health Services, where rapid covid tests are available. The school will work with those students who need to be out. While mask wearing is optional, the school asks that everyone respect others’ choices regarding masks. The District does not qualify for on-site Shield testing due to low volume, but tests are widely available in the area. Mr. Dronen asked for any questions or comments from the Board.

Mr. Das, regarding the NT Block Schedule App, gave kudos to the person who created it as he overheard his junior praising the app.

#### **C. Facilities Update: Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project**

Mr. Johnson provided an update on the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project (ESSA) as well as other ongoing facilities work. Mr. Johnson displayed the progress that has been made with the construction project and went on to describe the work in various pictures. He shared pictures of the grounds garage, which is a related project. Mr. Johnson thanked those who have toured the site including several Board members and Kinetic Wellness (KW) teachers and coaches. The schedule is being monitored closely regarding labor, supply chain, weather, among other issues. There will be a more complete schedule update in the coming weeks.

Next, Mr. Johnson shared about the projects that were completed as part of the 15-Year Plan: Summer 2022 work. First was the Special Education Transition Center where Mr. Johnson noted that phase one construction is complete which includes the installation of office and store furniture and fixtures. There will be additional work at the Transition Center next summer. Mr. Johnson shared pictures from the space and the open house. Mr. Johnson thanked the facilities staff who put the project together with short notice as the lease was signed in March. It was great collaboration between facilities staff, administration, and Special Education teachers and leaders.

The roof replacement on the North building is complete at Winnetka. The elevator in the Tower building has also been upgraded. The basketball backstops in the Bickert Gym were also updated.

Planning is already underway for work during the Summer of 2023. Mr. Johnson highlighted other work that is in progress now. There was a groundbreaking for the Duke Childs Field project, which has been worked on for many

years. Mr. McLane spoke on behalf of the Board and Ms. Hahn also attended. Work is underway and will provide relief for village residents while also being a better and more reliable facility for students. Village work will be complete in late fall or winter. New Trier will have its baseball season and once complete in the summer, work on its share of the improvements will begin. Mr. Johnson provided an update on the Bickert Gym roof which is the last major roof to replace at Winnetka.

At a previous Board meeting, a presentation was given about what has been accomplished regarding facilities work at both campuses. This has led to a revision of the 15-Year Plan and thoughtfully looking at what the District's goals should be for the next 10-15 years. Facilities play an important role in supporting the work that students, teachers, and staff do in the classroom. They also play an important role in collaboration, security, and energy efficiency. The District will continue to gather feedback from staff, administration, and students. Priorities will be reassessed based on the District's current needs while also being informed from all the work it is doing with the Strategic Plan, security, environmental stewardship, among others. The plan will be revised and updated based on the accomplishments of the past four years. Cost estimates will also need to be updated due to the increased cost of construction. The District will revise the budget and scope based on the availability of funds. Mr. Johnson highlighted the areas of focus including the Winnetka Campus North and Tower Buildings which still have 52 unrenovated classrooms and 14 labs, continued needs for security improvements, including how visitors are received and welcomed along with continuing to ensure that the design of spaces provides support for the school's student services delivery model. At the Northfield Campus, classrooms will continue to be renovated as well as improvement to the district administration space to increase collaboration. Another area of focus will be on solar power at Winnetka. Mr. Johnson also shared more details on the areas of focus at the Winnetka Campus in the North and Tower buildings, which were constructed in 1934 and 1956 respectively. One of the five floors was recently renovated, so the remaining floors also need to be done, however, the approach needs to be thoughtful and considered in totality. This will allow the District to be most efficient with its dollars and the biggest benefits can be brought to students, teachers, and the community. Next steps include reviewing priorities and alignment with student needs and New Trier 2030, gathering feedback from students, staff, and administration, determining available fund with the Finance Committee, continuing consultation with the Facilities Steering Committee and developing preliminary scope and sequence for future projects. The District will present a revised 15-Year Plan late in the spring of 2023. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Albrecht noted that the change order is the largest yet regarding what has been spent totally on change orders, which is just under \$935,000. She also noted that the contingency usage balance is another \$1.1 million and inquired if that is based on items the District already knows about. Mr. Johnson replied that this change order is higher than typical but is an artifact of the schedule. The work has been moving so quickly that there are change orders waiting to be processed that have not been in previous months. He went on to note that the two previous totals were \$20,000 and \$26,000, so the \$475,000 for August should be averaged over the previous two months due to the backlog. That work was put on hold while critical scheduling and planning issues were tended to. Regarding the projected contingency usage, there is a process, one that was used with the last project as well, that whenever the District thinks there may be something that needs to be addressed, it is put on the future log with a plug number. The log has many items at the beginning of the project, but then is adjusted as needed. The owner's contingency projected usage is zero, Ms. Albrecht inquired if most of that, such as furniture, is coming at the end. Mr. Johnson confirmed this, noting that owner's contingency is kept separate in case it needs to be added to the construction contingency. Most of the District's items come at the end as it has a smaller share of the project, many of which are set. It is kept separate in case of extraordinary needs on the construction side.

Brief comments from Mr. McLane led to Mr. Johnson offering any Board member the opportunity to sign the last steel beam before it is covered as is tradition. He noted that a beam was unearthed from 1921 that a previous construction crew had signed.

Ms. Hahn noted that she found it interesting that the District is revising a 15-Year Plan in year four as 15 years seems like an ambitious time to plan as so much changes. She noted that the value of the Strategic Plan is that it is a living document that is evaluated yearly. Ms. Hahn inquired as to how this came up and if 15 years is the right timeframe to think about facilities projects. Mr. Johnson replied that the 15-Year Plan is also thought about as a living document with broad categories where only one year of work is approved at a time. Work is adjusted as needed such as a roof that could last longer or if there is a new priority in the Strategic Plan where addressing classroom needs earlier than planned is wanted. He also noted that the District wants to ensure that every renovation or capital improvement dollar is well-spent so having a general idea of when items will be addressed alleviates doing that work only to re-renoate it several years later. Mr. Johnson noted that the plan is not set in stone as one year is always being added at



the end of the plan and work is reprioritized over time. After additional comments, Ms. Hahn commended Mr. Johnson that the work has remained as close to on schedule and on budget as possible.

Next, Ms. Hahn noted that the Board has heard about the planning that went in to accommodating KW and athletics during the renovation. She thought it would be interesting to hear how that is going. On a related note, Ms. Hahn shared comments about the Transition Center, suggesting that it would be good to hear how the Educational and Life Skills (ELS) program has been able to take advantage of moving off-site into a larger space. Overall, she would like to hear how these facilities changes have impacted students. Mr. Johnson replied that this can be addressed in a future presentation. He went on to commend KW, ELS and Transition teachers as well as coaches have been partners in all of this. They have ensured that the school is still offering a full program to students by being flexible and creative. Mr. Johnson noted that KW teachers and coaches were invited to tour the site as well. He also noted that recently, several administrators toured Stevenson High School, who is a year ahead of New Trier with a large athletic project. He shared how wonderful it was to see teachers, coaches and students view the new space.

Mr. Dronen, referencing Mr. Johnson's earlier comments, inquired if the construction work was behind schedule. Mr. Johnson noted that ten weather days were budgeted for the project and about 35 were used instead, due to a tremendously wet spring. While days were lost due to weather, the project is still hitting key milestones within a week. Pepper Construction has been creative in sequencing the various contractors on site. Once the roof is done, it will allow for more trades on the site. Mr. Dronen then inquired when under roof will be, with Mr. Johnson replying sometime in October, and more information would be provided next month. There will also be a more detailed update around November.

## **VII. Administrative Items**

### **A. Treasurer's Report for July 2022**

Mr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for July 2022, the first month of the fiscal year. It was typical with account balances and expenditures being routine. One item to note is that the District is still awaiting the issuance of tax bills. The District continues to monitor its cash flow, which was also discussed with the Finance Committee. The District believes it will have adequate account balances for expenditures as the school year and student programming resumes. Account balances for all accounts is \$142,766,019.

### **B. Financial Report for July 2022**

Mr. Johnson presented the Financial Report for July 2022. The report shows preliminary, unaudited results for the last year. Although they are preliminary numbers, the District is pleased so far with the results. The audit is proceeding on schedule with a presentation planned for October. Monthly spending was typical and there were no significant trends to report due to the variability of timing in summer purchases. Operating revenue was \$2.7 million for the first month of the fiscal year, or 88% higher compared to last year and is a variance on a small number.

Other local sources include larger Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax (CPPRT) receipts than in FY22. This has been monitored by the Finance Committee and is determined by the state. Due to this revenue being higher, it has led to a larger disbursement to all schools. The tentative budget for operating revenue is 1.3% lower than last fiscal year as the District backs out one-time federal grants. Any revenue the District receives by August 30<sup>th</sup> that is attributable to last year will be recognized by the accountants as they complete the audit. Operating expenditures were \$4.66 million through July, or 10% higher than last year's \$4.2 million. The tentative budget for operating expenditures is 3.52% higher than last year. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board about either report.

## **VIII. Consent Agenda**

- Bill List for the Period, July 1 – 31, 2022
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Leave of Absence, Resignations, Stipends - Appointment, and Stipends - Separation)
- Board Policy Revisions – PRESS 109 – Second Reading
- Contract with Siemens for access control system maintenance (2022-2025)

Mr. Dronen inquired if any members wanted to pull an item off the Consent Agenda, no one chose to do so.

Dr. Sally commented that there was one small revision to policy 2:150 as well as important, but non substantive punctuation updates that he was also provided.

Mr. Das moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: Bill List for the Period, July 1 – 31, 2022; Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Leave of Absence, Resignations, Stipends - Appointment, and Stipends - Separation); Board Policy Revisions – PRESS 109 – Second Reading; and the agreement with Siemens for the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 school years and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the agreement.

Ms. Albrecht seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Ms. Hahn, Mr. Dronen

NAY: none

The motion passed.

**IX. Board Member Reports**

Mr. McLane noted that the **Facilities Steering Committee** met, and the information was presented earlier in the meeting.

**X. Calendar of Events & Board Members' Requests for Staff Research and Future Agenda Items**

Dr. Sally mentioned that his office was still gathering all the meeting dates for various organizations that the Board members participate in. Ms. Ruston, Board Secretary, continues to follow-up with various groups for that information.

Dr. Sally highlighted the following:

- Sports are well underway and already competing.
- The first home football game will be Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.
- Lagniappe Potpourri will take place on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup>. It is always a great show and Ms. Ruston will reach out to see if any Board members would like to attend.
- There will also be a ribbon cutting for the Transition Center, date to follow.

Mr. Dronen inquired if there were any requests for staff research or future agenda items. He mentioned that Ms. Hahn had two earlier in the evening which Dr. Sally noted.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Albrecht moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, to adjourn. Upon a voice vote being taken, all members indicated they were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

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Keith Dronen, President