

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

January 18, 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 Tuesday, January 18, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present

Ms. Cathy Albrecht, President
Ms. Kimberly Alcantara
Mr. Avik Das
Mr. Keith Dronen, Vice President
Ms. Jean Hahn
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, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal – Winnetka Campus
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

Present via Phone

Mr. Brad McLane

Absent

Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary

Also Present

Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources; Mr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer; Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Ms. Aileen Geary, Social Studies Department Faculty and New Trier High School Educational Association President; Mr. Dave Conway, Director of Physical Plant Services, Mr. Nick Cosek, project manager from Pepper Construction; Mr. Marty Platten, project executive from Pepper Construction; Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; students, members of the press and community.

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER – 5:00 p.m. – C234

Ms. Albrecht called the Regular Meeting of January 18, 2022 of the Board of Education to order at 5:02 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus.

Roll call was taken, and all members were present. Mr. McLane participated via phone.

Ms. Albrecht asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Mr. Dronen moved that the Board adjourns to closed session for the purpose of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors, or specific volunteers of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor, or a volunteer of the District or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity; 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 placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students; 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; and discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. Ms. Hahn seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

II. CLOSED SESSION – 5:00 p.m. – A303

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

Ms. Albrecht recalled the Regular Meeting of January 18, 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. Mr. McLane participated via phone.

IV. Minutes

Ms. Albrecht asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 13, 2021 (open and closed session) and the Special Meeting of January 10, 2022 (open session). There were no requests for changes to the minutes. Ms. Hahn moved, and Mr. Dronen seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 13, 2021 (open and closed session) and the Special Meeting of January 10, 2022 (open session). Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

IV. Communications

Ms. Albrecht 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 to Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. There were nine requests for public comment. Ms. Albrecht reminded those speaking to keep their comments to three minutes or less per Board Policy 2:230. She also asked that attendees refrain from clapping or a response of any kind in regard to comments and noted that masks are required in the buildings and must remain on at all times, even while giving public comment.

1. Ms. Elisabeth Franzen, parent, shared comments about mask wearing. Ms. Albrecht reminded Ms. Franzen in the beginning of her comments that it is the policy of the school that masks be worn at all times.
2. Mr. David Iskowich, parent, shared comments about mask wearing and inquired about the criteria and facts that inform and guide the Board's decision to comment on current events. Dr. Sally clarified that many of the items the speaker shared were messages from the superintendent as opposed to messages from the Board.
3. Ms. Adrienne Sassaman, thanked Ms. Tomlinson for her response to her email. Ms. Sassaman also shared comments about mask wearing and Marxism.
4. Ms. Amanda Nugent shared comments about mask wearing. She also shared her support for the school in addressing all kinds of uncomfortable and tragic topics.
5. Ms. Beth Feeley shared an excerpt from wirepoints.com regarding masking.
6. Mr. Jon Marshall, parent of New Trier graduates, shared comments about what he never learned in school regarding racism in this country. He noted that he was glad that New Trier is addressing racism.
7. Ms. Laurie Goldstein shared comments and gratitude that the District is looking out for the interest of all students. She also shared comments in regard to the teaching of history of this country that is comprehensive, and fact based.
8. Ms. Dorothy Myers, alum and parent of New Trier graduates, shared comments about mask wearing as well as government funding for Covid protocols.
9. Ms. Joan Oh, parent of New Trier graduates, shared comments about mask wearing. She also shared thoughts on educating students who understand this country's complex history.

VI. Special Orders of Business

A. 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:

- Current Freshmen are working with their advisers on course selection for next year.
- Second semester begins Monday, and finals did not take place. Teachers continue to support those students who were out due to illness as was the Academic Assistance Center, who provided Zoom support for those at home.
- Mr. Waechtler thanked staff and students for participating in the Shield saliva testing the first week back from Winter Break. Many asymptomatic cases were found through this testing.
- Northfield Dance Ensemble took place before break and was the first live dance performance since the pandemic began. About 100 dancers performed about 20 different dances throughout the day.
- Mr. Waechtler shared information about displays from the freshmen art classes.

- Mr. Waechtler thanked Mr. Johnson, Associate Superintendent, and Physical Plant Services for their work on the booster clinic that was hosted in the cafeteria on January 12th.
- Academic Life was held virtually for the Class of 2026. There was also a Question and Answer with coordinators. He thanked Ms. Gail Gamrath, Assistant Principal, and Ms. Lori Worth, Eighth Grade Transition Coordinator, and others for their participation.
- All About Electives will take place on January 26th.
- Department coordinators are making placement recommendations for incoming freshmen. By early February, incoming freshmen and their families will have what they need in order to select courses and levels for next year.

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

- She shared that a video was done for incoming 9th grade families. Ms. Mary Lempa, Special Education Instructional Assistant, worked on the drawings in the video. Mr. Chris Pearson, Senior Adviser Chair, included all adviser chairs in the script.
- As the construction project begins on the east side of the campus, Mrs. Dubravec displayed a map of parking along with information that was shared with students and families. A video was also created and shared. Some adjustments have been made as well as working to understand a variety of ways that the school can move traffic.
- Science Olympiad finished fourth out of 60 teams.
- Senior Project is set to start again soon.
- Mrs. Dubravec encouraged people to view one of the videos that Mr. Caden Greco, sophomore, from the Broadcast Journalism class worked on. He interviewed Mr. Augie Fontanetta, Athletic Director, as they walked through the east side part of the building discussing its history.
- New Trier's Society of Women in Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Technology and Science (SWEETS) and G-Force clubs hosted a local Girl Scout troop.
- Mr. Nic Meyer, Music and Theatre Department Faculty, is working hard on the 39th Annual Jazz Fest that will take place on February 5th.
- Mrs. Dubravec thanked the Parents' Association as they brought in lunch for Special Education Instructional Assistants and Health Services.
- Trevaplooza has been moved to March 19th. It will be held at the Northfield campus and Mrs. Dubravec will send an email with additional details.

Mr. Johnson gave the FOIA report, noting that there were nine requests since the last Board meeting, eight are closed and one remains open. They include requests regarding sound monitoring reports, selected bid results, a variety of records related to professional development, training, and District programs, as well as information on college counseling, lost or stolen remote learning equipment, graduates, leases and details about the District's ESSER or federal funds spending.

B. 2021-2022 School Year Update

Dr. Sally gave an update on the 2021-2022 school year and began by sharing about the first two weeks back to school after Winter Break. He acknowledged that there was a lot of great work done by many people to make these first two weeks happen. Although there were staffing challenges, about 90% of classes were covered by the classroom teacher. It is a testament to the commitment of teachers, substitutes, and the human resources department. Student attendance dipped to 82% on average during the week of January 3rd but improved to an average of 88% the following week. For context, 93% is typical attendance. The District implemented a shortened quarantine for students and staff who are asymptomatic or whose symptoms have resolved. Symptomatic students and staff must stay home until symptoms have resolved. Almost a third of students who could have come back under the new shortened quarantine continued to stay home.

Mr. Johnson thanked families and staff for the high participation rate in Shield testing during the first week back. It helped the District to ensure that the environment was as safe as possible. Testing was spread out over the entire week as it helps to better detect Covid in the environment. The first week, 4,083 students and staff tested with a 5.17% positivity rate, which mirrored local and state numbers. The second week, though fewer people tested, there was good participation overall with a positivity rate just under three percent.

Dr. Sally shared that meeting the learning needs of students at home has been ongoing all year. He noted that

teachers have done a magnificent job supporting students who are at home. The school has implemented an individualized approach as it keeps students engaged and uses their time well. It does take a significant commitment from staff and while there are other solutions that may be easier, the alternative of Zooming into the classroom when most students are in-person is ineffective. He thanked teachers for being responsive to the individualized approach.

Next, Dr. Sally spoke about final exams, noting they were canceled, and that this decision was made in the best interest of students. The increase in instructional days allowed the end of the semester to slow down for students. Students who were not feeling well would also be more likely to stay home reducing possible transmission. Those students who wanted to improve their grade, still have opportunities to do so. Dr. Sally noted that the high standards at New Trier are still maintained. The school plans to hold second semester finals.

Covid guidance and decision making continues to change. Dr. Sally noted a lawsuit in Sangamon County that challenges the authority of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to implement mitigations in schools across the state. Dr. Sally recommends that the District continue its current mitigation practices. The continuation of current practices does not stop the District from changing them later on when the situation evolves. Right now, there continues to be a surge and the school will continue to have immunocompromised students and staff. While wearing a high-quality mask individually is effective, it is true that it is more effective when everyone wears a mask. In looking at how the school wants to run, it is important to affirm that the Board wants to continue its current mitigation practices. The next agenda item asks the Board to affirm that with a resolution. Dr. Sally noted that if the lawsuit provides for local control, this establishes where the District will start, and the Board will continue to discuss. It is not limiting to the Board once the resolution is approved in terms of future actions.

Dr. Sally then spent time talking about where the District goes next, noting that all reports are that Covid will be here for a long time. Some therapeutics have been approved with more in the pipeline and availability will improve. Dr. Sally noted the importance of acknowledging the meaningful steps that have been taken to return to normal. Covid will at some point be treated as an endemic and not a pandemic. In this current surge, some measures have been tightened and when the surge tapers down, the District will look at next steps. Those next steps could include following reduced quarantine and isolation guidance when available as well as adjusting masking guidance. Dr. Sally noted the importance that the community hear that the District is not stuck where it is. The District is doing what it is now to protect students and staff. The District is waiting for the time when it can change its mitigations, when the virus, its transmission, and the way it is appearing in the school allows for it.

Mrs. Dubravec then shared about student support days, noting they were created based on feedback from students and staff. Students expressed that they did not have enough time to see teachers during the day or to make-up a test. Therefore, certain subjects will end their classes early on an assigned day and students will then be able to do a variety of tasks such as go see a teacher, make up a test or meet with their post-high school counselor. Mr. Eric Duffett, Business Education Department faculty, created an app called NT Block. In adviser room, students watched a video by Mrs. Dubravec explaining the support day and how to manage it. Mrs. Dubravec shared various features of the app. She then shared an example of support planning for a week. Mrs. Dubravec received help from Ms. Anne Twadell, Special Education Department faculty, Ms. Megan Zajac, Director of Special Education, and other teachers about how a student could organize their day and think about it in advance. Subjects will rotate about two to three times in the semester. The student support days begin on January 24th.

Dr. Sally shared that the student support days will be at Winnetka only. He also noted that alumni report that being able to seek help and advocate for oneself is an area that New Trier taught them well in. After a couple years of the pandemic, students need to relearn this or practice it for the first time as an upperclassman. This is an exciting part to the change as it will help to improve those skills in students. He then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Albrecht noted that having the app available with the rotating support block schedule is a great way to keep track of everything.

Ms. Alcantara expressed her appreciation for the app which is a great improvement for the school's population. She also noted how amazing it was that a teacher created the app and is proud to be part of a school where this sort of thing gets done. Mrs. Dubravec added that the app will be automatically downloaded by Mr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer, and his team to students' iPads.

Ms. Hahn commended teachers, administration and staff who worked hard to continuously innovate to serve the best interest of students, particularly during the pandemic. After further comments, she noted that everyone has a different opinion on how to best navigate the pandemic, but she has never questioned that the motivation for everyone working with students is in their best interests. Continually evaluating and reevaluating that the decisions being made are serving students. She asked that this be held in the minds of the community and to show grace when people perhaps disagree with one another as the end result for everyone is to serve the interests of students.

Dr. Sally shared what he communicated to the community regarding masks, noting that students should be wearing a surgical mask or KN95. They are not disciplined if they do not, but it is what they should be wearing, and parents should be complying with it. Many students and families are doing this, and it is appreciated.

Ms. Albrecht shared about observing in classrooms and noted that the energy in the school is fantastic. She noted that whatever keeps in-person sustainable is what makes sense for the school.

***C. Resolution Regarding Local Control to Mitigate COVID-19**

Mr. Dronen moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board of Education adopt the resolution regarding local control to mitigate Covid-19. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

D. Profile of the Class of 2021

Mr. Tragos presented the Profile of the Class of 2021. Since the creation of the Strategic Plan, the decision was made to separate a much longer report that included extracurriculars into two reports. This one is an academic perspective. Mr. Tragos noted that it is not the only way that he or the school think about students, but rather one of the ways. The report is a starting point for conversations among students, faculty, parents, and the community. It plays a role in post-high school planning as well as curriculum planning.

Mr. Tragos noted that the purpose of the profile is to give all stakeholders a perspective on the pathways through New Trier, demonstrate the flexibility and fluidity of the level system, as well as the impact of Covid. The data set includes 881 students who were at New Trier for all four years with a total of 959 graduates in the class of 2021.

Next, Mr. Tragos shared about the course-taking patterns in the core academics. He began by noting the impact of Covid on this class. These students were juniors when the pandemic began in March of 2020. Students spent fourth quarter of their junior year in remote learning. The following school year, these now seniors, began in remote learning and transitioned to hybrid learning going from two days in school per week up to four days by the end of the school year. Covid disrupted learning in many ways and some students struggled for a variety of reasons. In an effort to support students and mitigate the long-term negative effects of the pandemic on their academic record, the District extended grace and flexibility to the deadline of when students could drop a course. This was done to support students and maintain an on-pace time to graduation while mitigating the negative effects of low grades and managing overall. This is evident in the decrease in the number of students who took 19 or more core academic courses. The school typically recommends that a student take four to five core academics per year. The class of 2021 had 59% of students who took 19 or more core academics over the course of four years, which is a six percent decrease compared to the class of 2020. This is the second consecutive decrease, as the class of 2020 took fewer courses than the class of 2019. Around 12% of students took more than 20 academic courses, while a slight decrease from 2020, this had been trending up over the last three years. More students are taking between 16-18.5 core academic courses. Overall, students are still within the recommended range with a slight difference from previous years.

Mr. Tragos shared information about the course-taking patterns in elective courses, noting that enrollment continued to be strong with only a slight dip in 2021. He gave kudos to the elective courses faculty for the experiences they created for students via Zoom as it is difficult to replicate their lab spaces, workshops, and studios remotely. Mr. Tragos noted that 59.6% of students took between two and four elective courses, a slight dip from 2020, but still higher than it had been over the last several years. There was also an increase in the number of students taking between 4.5-8 electives. There was a slight decline with this class regarding who took an elective as a freshman.

Mr. Tragos shared a chart that focused on the level profile which is the number and percentage of students who take core academic courses at a particular level or mix of levels. This report tries to dispel some myths around course taking patterns and what all students do. The number of students who take only level four courses over their four years at New Trier is 32. Only 4.1% of students took only level three courses, while 22 students took only level two classes. Mr. Tragos notes that the level system provides flexibility to meet each student's needs over the course of four years. The main takeaway is the increasing number of students who take core academic courses in a combination of levels two, three and four. This year, the percentage is 14.6%, up from 13.6% last year. He shared further details on this.

Mr. Tragos then went on to share about another part of the report, the college matriculation chart. The chart identifies the colleges to which at least five students from those who attended New Trier all four years matriculated. New Trier students attended 227 different colleges, with 42 of those colleges having at least five New Trier students attending. The chart represents those colleges that students chose to attend and is not the number of admittances. This information is matched up to their course taking patterns. It is also divided up by level profile, the number of electives, the number of core academics and the number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Mr. Tragos recognized the work of New Trier's post-high school counselors who have helped Mr. Tragos and others to understand what has shifted in the landscape over the last couple of years. The motto of the post-high school department is, "college is a match to be made, not a prize to be won" and is an important part of where students find their match.

Some of the impact that is starting to be seen with Covid is a trend of a spike in the number of applications with a decrease in acceptance rates. This is particularly sharp change at highly selective schools. Many students over the past two years did not have access to ACT or SAT scores or test prep, among other factors. Many schools, picking up on a decades-long trend, went test optional or even test blind. Nearly 90% of schools who are in the Common App went test optional or blind for the class of 2021. About two-thirds of colleges and universities nationwide were test optional. This allowed for greater opportunities for students to submit applications, which they did. Many acceptance rates fell into single digits, some were below five percent at highly selective schools. Students in the class of 2020, who were admitted as fall of 2020 deferred their admission to claim a seat in the fall of 2021, which drove acceptance rates down for current seniors at New Trier and other schools around the country. These two factors combined led to the massive increase in the number of applications and schools becoming even more selective. Students continued to submit ACT and SAT test scores with about 40% of students submitting test optional. Mr. Tragos shared some of these shifts that have been seen and what they mean for students. All of this work is done with the post-high school counselors given their knowledge, expertise, and experience. They continue to work with colleges and universities to see if these are anomalies for this class or if these are trends that are likely to stay. Aside from these shifts, students matriculated to colleges and universities similar to previous rates. Mr. Tragos then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Tomlinson asked for clarification on where the engineering classes fit in when talking about the electives. Mr. Tragos responded that they are found in Applied Arts – Tech Ed.

Ms. Alcantara inquired how the Modern and Classical Languages courses are characterized, to which Mr. Tragos responded they are part of core academic.

Mr. Dronen inquired if the test optional is a trend from Covid or if it will continue, especially with more selective colleges dropping SAT requirements. If so, he inquired how that will impact New Trier students getting into some of these colleges. Mr. Tragos noted that in working with post-high school counseling, they are trying to determine if that is here to stay or not. In some of the most selective schools, they have been leading the way for some time. Mr. Tragos went on to shared additional comments noting that post-high school counselors work with students about whether submitting a test is the right decision.

Ms. Hahn thanked Mr. Tragos for the report. She inquired if the school tracks the trajectory of students as they take different levels. She inquired if the school generally sees a progression amongst students to take increasingly higher-level courses over their four years or if it is a back and forth. Mr. Tragos responded that it is a back and forth depending on life circumstances of some students. The school recommends students and families to have a successful start in ninth grade at the recommended levels, noting there are opportunities to move up over time. Mr. Tragos noted that it follows this trajectory more than anything else. Dr. Sally shared that there is not hard data on this, but anecdotally. He noted that the message is to have a successful freshmen year so students should take on

something where they know they will be successful or have the best chance to do well. Dr. Sally went on to say that a student can still learn in any level and will change levels based on their priorities or for various other reasons. Ms. Hahn followed up, that had there been more than anecdotal evidence, did the school see less of an upward trajectory and more of a downward one due to the pandemic last year. Dr. Sally replied that the school has not looked at this, but suggested it was not what the school saw.

Ms. Hahn then asked questions about the gap year data, inquiring whether it was commensurate with previous years. She also inquired if it is a defined and formal designation or simply means that a student did not matriculate to a two- or four-year school. Mr. Tragos responded that seven students from the Class of 2021 are taking a gap year. It is a more formal designation rather than a placeholder. Mr. Tragos said there are also students with other post-high school plans such as military service or pursuing the next level of their sport. Ms. Hahn noted that those pursuits would not be a gap year, which Mr. Tragos confirmed.

Ms. Albrecht clarified that with the Class of 2021 there is still the biggest concentration of 19-20 majors, but there is growth in the 16-18.5 range. Ms. Albrecht inquired with this class, if it is a senior year issue where students were trying to take less classes due to the pandemic. Mr. Tragos replied that it has not been looked at in the hard data, rather it is anecdotal and qualitative in working with adviser chairs and families over the last five quarters. He does anticipate that this will ripple to other classes in a subtle way and not a massive shift.

Ms. Albrecht reminded students and parents that 90% of students are taking classes across multiple levels. It is the same when looking at college matriculation, it is across multi-levels of classes. Mr. Dronen noted it is also seen at the matriculation to the more selective schools.

E. 2022-2023 Block Schedule Update

Mr. Tragos presented an update on the 2022-2023 block schedule, noting that the memo was co-authored with Dr. Sally, however, there are many people who have shared in the work. The school has been evaluating the daily schedule since spring of 2020. When school went remote in the spring of 2020, students had a nine-period day, soon after it was apparent that this schedule was not going to work on Zoom. The District shifted to a Blue-Green Day, a Trevian Day was then added which was then adjusted and known as a Grey Day. In the fourth quarter, there were four Blue-Green Days with Mondays being the Grey Day. For the 2020-2021 school year, the school adopted a blended nine-period day. A Grey Day was also included so the schedule was Grey-Blue-Green plus an X-block. In January 2021 the District received feedback from students, staff and parents on the traditional nine-period schedule, the rotating eight-period block, and the blended eight-period block. For the 2021-2022 school year, the school adopted its current schedule which is a rotating eight-period block.

Mr. Tragos then shared that it has been a formal and informal process evaluating the block schedule since August 2021 and listed the ways that feedback has been gathered from all stakeholders. In October 2021, the Block Schedule Committee drafted a survey that teachers administered to their students for immediate feedback and adjusted accordingly. Teachers also reflected on student feedback with course committees and departments. Then summary feedback from teachers to the committee and administration was used to make systemwide adjustments to the current schedule. Mr. Tragos spoke to changes that would take place at the Winnetka Campus as noted earlier by Mrs. Dubravec. The common theme that emerged from the feedback was that more time was needed for students to meet with teachers, make-up tests, and access support as well as more time for teachers to collaborate with their colleagues. In December 2021, the District partnered with K12 Insight to design, draft, deploy and analyze a survey that would be sent to all students, staff, and parents. There was strong participation and K12 Insight provided a rich analysis and report of the results. Four focus groups consisting of students, staff and parents also took place in December and January to probe deeper at questions and themes that emerged from the survey.

Next, Mr. Tragos shared the survey results which included the executive summary as well as what is working well along with some challenges. Parents had a response rate of 24% but the rate is much higher if looked at on a per household basis. Staff had a response rate of 55% and students at 43%. Mr. Tragos summarized that the schedule is working, but it has challenges, and can be improved. In the areas where the schedule is working there is enough time for teaching and learning such as collaborating with students and teaching curriculum. Students also feel like they are learning and connecting with their teachers. They reported that their workload is manageable due to alternating days which helps with homework. Students also said that they can take the set of core and elective classes they want. Mr. Tragos noted it is interesting as students report they can take core academics at a higher rate than electives and in talking to them in focus groups, they say they want to take more electives. Challenges include a focus on time, needing more for collaboration with colleagues, meeting time for teachers and students, time to make up work,

ability to provide extra support to students as well as balancing schoolwork across Blue and Green Days. The block schedule can be improved with modifications according to students and faculty, less so from the parents' perspective, but many responded that they just did not know. Key questions emerged that sounded like solutions and recommendations from the survey and focus groups that need to be answered. Questions include adding an Anchor Day similar to a Trevian Day, which would be a built-in fixed day on Monday; the length of the block, which is currently 85-minutes; and time for students and teachers.

Mr. Tragos highlighted comparison information by participant group. He shared two questions and the percentage of strongly agree or agree. In the area of learning, the statement was, "My student(s) has/have enough time to understand class material and content during the class period," it received strong support and a high level of agreement. Parents and students responding to "My student(s) has/have enough time to engage with their peers during the school day" which was a broad statement regarding both in class and outside of class as well as academically and socially. This received a high level of support. In terms of time and workload, responses were generally positive. Parents replied, at a high rate of 84%, that their student's homework load is manageable while students agreed less so. Students provided further insight in focus groups, noting that it can be hit or miss based on a variety of factors, though they did note that the alternating days help with balancing their schedule. At the same time, students also frankly admit that they should be completing work in advance, but often wait to do so until the night before it is due.

Parents and students also agreed that there is high access to after-school activities. Mr. Tragos shared that an item that was corollary to this were the generally positive responses and a high level of agreement around students getting more sleep and reduced stress due to workload. Mr. Tragos would like to know more about the sleep question, as 45% of parents reported that their students are getting more sleep, what is unknown is why other disagreed with that statement. Dr. Sally added that as the District continues to look at its Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) results, there will be more data available, and the school will look to see if there is any impact on those surveys. Mr. Tragos noted that faculty and staff agreed with the statement "the block schedule can be improved with modification." Faculty and staff agreed with this statement at a high level, while parents agreed at 55% with 27% of parents answering that they do not know.

Next, Mr. Tragos shared challenges that were identified in the survey. The survey statement was "My student(s) can schedule time during the school day to meet with their teachers," with 57% of parents responding that they agree and 47% of faculty agreeing. This will be addressed with the changes that have been made to second semester. Another challenge was seen with the level of dissatisfied responses to the statement, "I am satisfied with the length of each block (85 minutes), which includes a 5-minute break." Mr. Tragos then spoke to shorter blocks and longer passing periods which would mean less instructional minutes per week, but this is not what teachers and students are asking for. It is about opportunity costs and trade-offs, and these are being worked through with staff, department leaders and students. Lastly, "the schedule would benefit from use of a weekly 'anchor day'" where the anchor day is on Monday where all eight classes meet, with Blue and Green Days then on fixed days to allow for predictability in the schedule. There is interest in this given the responses and the District is trying to understand what it means. Mr. Tragos acknowledged the greater impact around time on faculty who are not on the bell schedule. There are a number of student services faculty who meet with students by appointment or meeting, and this has been a challenge for them.

Mr. Tragos shared more details about the length of the block. When students were asked if they can focus their attention on learning for a full class block, 34% agreed, while the rest said they disagreed or did not know. When paired with the next statement of "I can better focus my attention on learning when the teacher plans multiple learning activities," there is a higher rate of response of 81% students. In focus groups, students are eager to share about their teachers who are making this work. Teachers share in focus groups that they are doing this either because it is somewhat natural, or they have done it in a previous schedule. They also share that they are getting better at this and want to get better. When looking at those students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP), 44% of them said they could pay attention for a full block, which was higher than the general response rate. Students with IEPs, 79%, said that they can focus better when the teacher plans multiple learning activities, which is very close to the 81% general response rate. Teachers are making deliberate decisions in their instruction to support students with IEPs, and it is an experience that the school wants to know more about. Parents shared concern in their focus groups that their child may not be able to focus for a variety of reasons, which the hard data does not necessarily bear out.

Regarding Anchor Day, students are intrigued by the idea, but want to know what they are in for before committing to it. Teachers are looking to support student services faculty who would benefit by having a predictable schedule.

Mr. Tragos also shared comments about keeping as close to 200 instructional minutes per week like was had with the nine-period day as well as the current block schedule, however, if passing periods are increased, that time has to come from somewhere. Mr. Tragos then shared the benefits and costs of Anchor Days. Benefits include consistent Blue/Green Days each week, however, there would be eight weeks during the year that would require an adjustment due to days off or other special days. Teachers would be able to see students three times a week, every week with regular scheduling for student services appointments. Costs include teachers planning for different length of instruction on a weekly basis, fewer full block days, student concern about homework load, impact on commuters and part-time teachers and the inability to schedule early dismissal/late start days around weekends which were helpful for professional development time for faculty and time for families.

Concerning time for students and teachers, 57% of parents responded that they agree that their students can schedule time during the school day to meet with their teachers. Faculty responded that there is not enough time. Some options to improve this is to have a rotating support block, similar to the second semester plan or an X-block either in the beginning or at the end of the day, but that would mean shortening blocks by ten minutes two times a week or some other interval. The pros and cons of other options are also under exploration.

Mr. Tragos summarized the successes as well as key questions for improvement. The recommendation is to continue with an eight-block schedule in 2022-2023 and present modifications in February to address the three key challenges. Dr. Sally shared that it has been a great process so far and has involved many different constituents. He thanked Mr. Tragos and the committee for their work. Through this process, areas have been identified that need problem-solving before a final schedule can be shared with the Board for their approval in February. Dr. Sally noted that given the successes and the work that has been done, he recommended an eight-block, four blocks on each day. Dr. Sally then asked the Board if they want him and his team to look at something other than that. With this recommendation, it allows the team to work out details in anticipation of the February presentation.

Ms. Alcantara thanked Mr. Tragos and the team for their work. Ms. Alcantara noted that she supports the block schedule with improvements for 22-23. She inquired if having an Anchor Day and the rotating X-block that students will have during second semester are mutually exclusive options. After some clarification, it was noted that they are not mutually exclusive, and both could be done. Next, Ms. Alcantara inquired if the Anchor Day needed to be on a Monday. Mr. Tragos noted that other day have been explored, but Monday works for a number of reasons. Dr. Sally added that any week where New Trier has Monday off, there would be no Anchor Day and the rest of the days remain the same. Ms. Alcantara noted that she is interested to hear how the rotating student support time each week goes and suspects it will make a big difference. Lastly, she noted that she would be opposed to a Grey Day where there are no scheduled classes. Dr. Sally stated that that will not occur with Ms. Alcantara confirming that an Anchor Day and Trevian Day are the same thing.

Mr. Dronen noted it was an excellent report. He asked for additional comments on a statement from the survey, “the excellence of New Trier teaching and learning has been maintained with the block schedule,” which 21% of teachers disagreed and 14% strongly disagreed. He also asked what is being done to address those teachers’ concerns. Mr. Tragos replied that the District is trying to figure out what it is a response to, such as teaching and learning has diminished or if it is a response to the dissatisfaction of the block schedule as a whole. In sharing this with department leaders, they are curious as well to this response. He noted it is an important question and discussions with departments and teachers need to continue. After sharing comments, he suspects it involves having a certain comfort level with teaching in a block schedule, especially as teachers continue to experiment with it. The support around professional development is another way to solve around the block. Mr. Dronen encouraged Dr. Sally to keep an eye on this. Mr. Dronen then inquired if the data was broken out to which Mr. Tragos replied it was not broken out by departments, but rather by teaching faculty and student services faculty. Mr. Tragos also shared that he heard comments in teacher focus groups similar to what Dr. Sally spoke about with teachers feeling like they are not their best selves. He shared other comments around this, noting that teachers are doing an amazing job. Mr. Dronen also asked in the February presentation if more time could be devoted to addressing IEP students.

Ms. Hahn wanted to connect a dot that Dr. Sally noted earlier about support for teachers and professional development. She wanted to confirm that some of the information and data gathered that said when teachers use a multidisciplinary approach it is more effective, if that is then taken from the survey and used to create professional development as well as support for students. Dr. Sally confirmed this and said the best example of that is the October data. This data went directly to the teacher where they reflected and discussed the feedback with their course committees. Dr. Sally shared additional comments and also emphasized Mr. Tragos’ comments that while teachers may be internalizing that they are not doing their best, they are, in fact, doing amazing work in the classroom. Ms.

Hahn noted this is an example of what she referenced earlier of continual evaluation of what is best for students. She thanked everyone for their work.

Ms. Hahn noted that in earlier iterations there was mention of changing how science is integrated into the block schedule and inquired if it is still a part of the evaluation. Mr. Tragos noted that it is not part of the evaluation for the 22-23 school year. Dr. Sally mentioned that this is not the end to iterating this and that the school will continue to evaluate whatever is done next year. The District wants to make sure that it takes measured, smart steps as it moves through the process.

Ms. Alcantara noticed that there was a significant percentage of students who said they do better with the block schedule in classes where the teacher has an assortment of activities. This implies to her that there are teachers who have adapted to doing that more quickly than others. She inquired if in the departments, lesson plans are shared where that successful mix is happening. Mr. Tragos replied that it has been happening within course committees and is a natural part of their collaboration. Teachers are also drawing on local resources and the professional relationships they have as well.

Mr. McLane thanked Mr. Tragos for his comprehensible review. He notes how impressive it has been to see how this has evolved over the past two years. He also shared his appreciation for how well it has done so. Mr. McLane also noted he likes how the District reaches out and compares to other schools. Mr. Tragos response included that it might have the biggest impact on student and teacher experiences with a series of fine tuning or incremental change.

Ms. Tomlinson noted that this is only one semester in on a dramatically different program and that not only has qualitative research been done, but also quantitative, with proposals already being made for improvement. She noted how impressed she is with the amount of work behind this.

Ms. Tomlinson then inquired if there is one set of students more challenged or impacted than others such as fine arts students and their ability to work their electives in along with play an instrument for 85 minutes. Mr. Tragos replied that he has worked with the New Trier Fine Arts Association (NTFAA), not only in focus groups, but individually as well. He noted that the fine arts students were not impacted more than other students by the schedule. While there were conflicts, they were similar to those seen in previous schedules. He went on to share additional comments. Regarding a student playing an instrument or singing for 85 minutes, it is an instructional decision that is being worked on in terms of best practice. Dr. Sally added that many students take two music classes and those would be on different days for the common overlaps.

Ms. Albrecht thanked Mr. Tragos for his thoroughness. She noted that while a decision will be made in February, refining will continue throughout second semester. Dr. Sally replied that while an ongoing process, at a certain point, it is no longer a monthly process as the schedule needs to be loaded and schedule conflicts worked out. The expectation is that at the February Board meeting, there will be an excellent recommendation with how the school wants to move forward. There will also be some feedback about the student support block as well. It is particularly important to get this set when thinking about having an Anchor Day or not as teachers are thinking about their lessons for next year. Ms. Albrecht thanked teachers for their work as it has been a lot of heavy lifting since March 2020. It has been a lot of work, collaboration, and brainstorming, but they continue to make it better.

Dr. Sally confirmed with the Board that the concept of the block schedule with four periods a day is good, noting there are the issues that still need to be worked out.

F. 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). The project began with abatement on December 27th with demolition beginning on January 10th. Work continues so as to improve traffic flow in collaboration with New Trier staff and the Winnetka Police Department. One of the issues is the traffic light on Green Bay Road, which is controlled by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), so the school is working to see if there is any room for its adjustment. Adjustments have been made to where the fence is to improve blind spots based on parent feedback. Mr. Johnson thanked parents, students, staff, and the community for their flexibility.

Bid package three, part two is the final set of bids presented for approval. There are \$5.4 million in bids for the Winnetka Campus East Side project and \$200,000 for the grounds garage project and both have associated contingency. The strategy of delaying bid package opening allowed for more bidders, reducing costs to the District.

Ten trades were opened in this bid package and the District is pleased with the amount of coverage. There were four to eight bids on major trades, demonstrating a competitive process. The acceptance of final bids provides more financial certainty for the project, as most construction costs are locked in, and contractors are committed. Contingency remains for any unexpected items.

Next, Mr. Johnson shared about the overall project budget, which was established in February 2021 and was before any significant construction and inflationary pressures. The administration, Wight, and Pepper along with the Facilities Steering Committee, have worked diligently to offset as many of these increases as possible through a total of \$3.4 million in design changes and alternates. Mr. Johnson shared that much care and attention was given so as not to compromise the educational program or quality of the facility through these adjustments. He noted that the Gates Gym was around for 100 years, so the District wants to build a facility that meets the needs of students tomorrow and into the future that also serves the community well. Based on the current bid results, the District will need to increase the project budget by 6%, which is less than national construction and overall inflation trends. Last year, overall inflation was at 7% and some construction estimates that Mr. Johnson had seen are at 20%. The District would have liked to maintain the original budget, but it is pleased to have capped it at only a 6% increase. The project budget now reflects a new estimate of \$79.5 million and contains a \$5 million contingency, aligning to industry best practices. The change in the budget can be accommodated through existing sources or available revenue without a property tax increase or any direct impact to taxpayers. Mr. Johnson provided the revised budget for the project financing sources: \$50.5 million for Alternate Revenue Bonds, which have been sold, \$14.5 million for DSEB Bonds, two-thirds of them are sold, and \$14.5 million, adjusted from \$12.5 million, from District Reserves to account for the overage. The revision is reflected in the 5-year financial plan. Mr. Johnson emphasized that the District is maintaining the character and quality of the design that will allow the District to continue to deliver an excellent educational program for students. Mr. Johnson invited questions and comments from the Board, noting that Mr. Dave Conway, Director of Physical Plant Services, Mr. Nick Cosek, project manager from Pepper Construction and Mr. Marty Platten, project executive from Pepper Construction were in attendance as well.

Ms. Tomlinson asked for clarification on the \$5 million contingency in the \$79.5 million, she noted that some of that contingency has already been committed. Mr. Johnson confirmed with Mr. Conway that it is \$5 million in remaining contingency. Mr. Johnson went on to further explain the numbers.

Ms. Hahn commended the ability to have a 6% increase in cost given the numbers. If the average is 20%, she noted it is a testament to the team's expertise, professionalism, and hard work. She thanked those involved in the project on behalf of the Board and community. Ms. Hahn then clarified that the increase in District reserves allows it to still maintain fund balances that are within the Board's recommendations. Mr. Johnson replied that the District is well within the recommendations and went on to explain this further. Ms. Hahn then followed up noting the trend in delayed tax receipts, confirming that the District's healthy fund balances allow it to weather those temporary shortfalls and the District is in a position to weather those should they occur again. Mr. Johnson confirmed that the District is in a position to weather them again if necessary.

Mr. McLane, a Facilities Steering Committee member, shared his perspective. He noted that it was impressive, with the inflation surge coming, to have the group anticipate that and through their diligence deliver above budget but within the realm of reason. His concern was that there would be a need to gut the project, which has not happened and that there is still a design with architectural integrity. Mr. McLane went on to share other words of appreciation.

Ms. Albrecht added that the whole team has been watching and managing costs from the beginning. She noted how Mr. Johnson watched steel futures in preparation for those bids, almost \$3 million in design changes were captured before going to bid and another \$500,000 of alternates were accepted. These were places where the District could save money without affecting the integrity and the long-term value of the project.

Brief discussion then took place between a few Board members and Mr. Johnson regarding watching the live feed of the construction camera.

***G. Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project Bid Package 3 (Part 2) Prime Trade Award**

Mr. Das moved, and Ms. Tomlinson seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the bids for trades for the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project totaling \$5,392,941 and contingency of \$269,647 and the bids for trades for the new campus grounds garage, totaling \$229,447 and contingency of \$11,472. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

VII. Administrative Items

A. Treasurer's Report for December 2021

Mr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for December 2021. Balance for all accounts was \$153,699,704. The total is higher than typical for this time of year, as \$57 million of bond revenue is included. As the bonds have been sold for the Winnetka Campus East Side Project. Interest rate revenue continues to be minimal, averaging about 0.5% across investments. Regular local, state, and federal payments continue to occur.

B. Financial Reports for December 2021

Mr. Johnson presented the Financial Reports for December 2021. Operating revenue was \$55,846,946 for the first six months of the fiscal year, or about 7% higher compared to last year. Other local sources will maintain a year-long positive variance as more revenue comes in associated with student programs and other items as they come back. The District received its first FEMA reimbursement for COVID expenses this month, and several additional payments have arrived in January. The District has received a total of \$656,000. Mr. Johnson anticipates that the District will receive close to \$2 million. The adopted budget for operating revenue is 5.34% higher, so the District is trending slightly above the adopted budget.

Operating expenditures were \$53.2 million through December, or 4.3% higher due to programs operating on a normal schedule such as athletics and stipends. The December CPI was 7%, and the District will watch for any material effects on expenses the rest of the fiscal year. The adopted budget for operating expenditures is slightly higher than last year. The District will watch carefully about the supplies and materials it is purchasing and how inflation is impacting what is bought for students as well as maintaining the facility as the District works through the budget process for next year. Page seven of the report details the fund for the East Side Academic and Athletic Project. The District has broken it into its own fund under capital projects for transparency and reporting purposes. Significant expenditures with the project will begin this month as construction and demolition begins. Mr. Johnson noted that a regular report will be developed regarding this. Mr. Johnson invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Hahn asked for clarification on the reimbursements for FEMA funds and other Covid-related funds noting these expenses incurred in order to operate school safely and are not funds the District received because it met a certain threshold. Mr. Johnson clarified that FEMA funds exist for authorized expenditures and is a rigorous process. Many of the expenditures over the past two years, such as extra cleaning services and masks, qualify for FEMA reimbursement. They are a direct reimbursement for qualified expenditures. The application process is long and arduous as contracts must be submitted and FEMA reviews this information to ensure that the items purchased qualify.

Ms. Albrecht shared an observation, giving the example from the education fund, that when one looks at year-over-year and sees a big increase in other local sources of revenue or a big percentage increase in interscholastic program expenses, those are due to the aberration of the previous year, which was not a normal school year. Mr. Johnson confirmed and shared further details. Discussion continued between Ms. Albrecht and Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson noted that he and Mr. Spiwak, when budgeting, look at variances over four years.

***C. Budget Assumptions and Parameters for 2022-23**

Mr. Johnson presented the budget assumptions and parameters for 2022-23. January begins the budget process for the next school year. It is also when course enrollments for incoming and current students occur. The process starts with a review of projected revenue and expenditures for next year and subsequent years as part of the 5-year plan. It also involves reviewing staffing plans and enrollment projections. Enrollment is projected to decrease by 70 students next year and several hundred over a five-year period that the District is in now, which aligns in many cases with planned staff retirements. The demographer reports strong interest in moving into the District and rising home prices, but less inventory.

On the revenue side, the District shows typical CPI increase in property taxes, flat state revenue, and federal decrease due to one-time pandemic reimbursements received this year. All revenues are projected to rise approximately one percent due to the decrease in federal revenue and one-time payments.

On the expenditure side, updates have been made with contractual salary increases. Supplies, material and purchased services remain at 1.5%. The District will carefully monitor both inflationary pressures which may raise some expenses well past 1.5% but is also working to understand what the offsets might be, such as reduced travel for professional conferences. This is an unusual period of inflation not seen since the early 1980s, and the District will continue to carefully monitor trends and adjust on an as-needed basis. All expenditures are predicted to rise about 3.56%. As the budget develops, the District will work to align revenue and expenditures, the current document shows about a \$1 million gap that needs to close, which is not uncommon at this point in the planning process. The Finance Committee will continue to monitor the budget building process with the District on track to present a balanced tentative budget this July. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen noted that with the expected increase in fed interest rates and with the District's reserves sitting mostly in cash right now, the District will be able to restart its treasury and CD ladder. Mr. Johnson confirmed this and shared additional details.

Mr. Das moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the budget calendar as presented and authorize the administration to begin the budgeting process. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

***D. Consideration and action on a resolution amending a resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$59,000,000 General Obligation Refunding School Bonds of the District**

Mr. Johnson presented the consideration and action on a resolution amending a resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$59,000,000 General Obligation Refunding School Bonds of the District. In 2014, voter's approved \$89 million in bonds for the Winnetka Campus West Side Project, which was completed in 2017 and has provided benefits to thousands of students, teachers, and community members. The bonds are callable later this year, and it is possible to refund and reissue them, providing a savings to taxpayers. Last October, the Board approved a resolution authorizing this refinancing. The District has been closely monitoring this with the Finance Committee and in consultation with the District's financial advisor, Ms. Liz Hennessey from Raymond James. Based on her recommendation and a review of market conditions, the District will move forward with refinancing now and will execute a refunding with a forward delivery, allowing it to lock in rates now and complete the transaction in September at the earliest possible call date. By approving the resolution, the District is amending a previous resolution to allow for both a public sale or private placement of the bonds. The District will evaluate, in consultation with Ms. Hennessey, which way will maximize the amount of savings for taxpayers. Right now, a private placement may yield better results. Mr. Johnson noted that indicative rates are lower than comparable sales in the public market. It is a small adjustment to an already approved plan that the District has been carefully monitoring over the past several months. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Albrecht reviewed that there was a resolution that the Board had already approved that allowed for a public sale. This resolution adds a second option of a private placement so there is more flexibility when the District goes to market, which Mr. Johnson confirmed.

Ms. Hahn moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the resolution amending a resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$59,000,000 General Obligation Refunding School Bonds of Township High School District Number 203, Cook County, Illinois. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- Bill List for the Period, December 1 – 31, 2021
- Personnel Report (Appointment, Changes of Status, Retirements, Stipends - Appointment, Stipends - Separation) and Addendum
- Approve the resolution authorizing the permanent abatement of Working Cash Funds as presented
- Resolution Authorizing Notice to Remedy
- Approve the agreements with Sentinel Technologies and CDWG as presented and the associated lease with Key Government Finance and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the agreements
- Accept the bid from the Boelter Companies for food service equipment and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the contract for purchase
- Approve the contract with Connection Inc. for equipment as presented and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the agreement
- The destruction of the Closed Session Meeting tapes of January 2020 through June 2020.

Ms. Albrecht inquired if any members wanted to pull an item off the Consent Agenda, Mr. Das asked that the Resolution Authorizing Notice to Remedy be pulled off. Mr. Dronen moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: Bill List for the Period, December 1 – 31, 2021; Personnel Report (Appointment, Changes of Status, Retirements, Stipends - Appointment, Stipends - Separation) and Addendum; Approve the resolution authorizing the permanent abatement of Working Cash Funds as presented; Approve the agreements with Sentinel Technologies and CDWG as presented and the associated lease with Key Government Finance and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the agreements; Accept the bid from the Boelter Companies for food service equipment and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the contract for purchase; Approve the contract with Connection Inc. for equipment as presented and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the agreement; and the destruction of the Closed Session Meeting tapes of January 2020 through June 2020. Mr. Das seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

Mr. Dronen moved, and Mr. McLane seconded the motion, the approval of the resolution authorizing notice to remedy.

A YE: Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: Mr. Das

The motion passed.

IX. Board Member Reports

Mr. Das shared that the **Booster Club** meeting was scheduled for the same time as this Board meeting.

Ms. Hahn shared that the **New Trier Educational Foundation (NTEF)** continues to collaborate with the District on the Innovation Hub. There is a Roundtable next week that will include potential donors and teachers involved in the project. Planning is also underway for the Day of Service on April 23rd. Last year there were 300 participants, and the hope is to grow that number and expand beyond the Chicagoland area this year. This project is headed by the NTEF's Young Alumni. NTEF reported that their annual fund goal had been met already in December. Ms. Hahn noted it is a testament to how valuable, and the community's appreciation, including alumni, the work that the school does. Ms. Hahn took a moment to report on the beautiful paper amaryllis that were available for purchase through Sofi's Greenhouse, which is run by Ms. Robin Magnusson, Special Education Instructional Assistant. Ms. Hahn shared her applause for the efforts of the greenhouse as a way to involve students. Ms. Hahn shared that this is how Sofi's Greenhouse was envisioned, as a legacy for this young woman and family who gave much to the school.

Mr. Dronen shared that the **Finance Committee** met on January 10th. The committee discussed the five-year plan, capital project planning, the District's strong financial performance over the last five years, as well as looked at long-term capital planning. Also discussed was the 15-year plan, which was adopted in August 2019 by the Board, with future work prioritizing academic and learning spaces as well as exploring off-site Transition spaces and funding sources. The Winnetka East Side project was discussed. The committee also talked about student fees, of which there are two types in the budget – general and user fees. There has been no fee increase since 2020 to the general fee. There was discussion about a possible 1.4% increase to that fee. The Finance Committee also met prior to the Board Meeting where they discussed the resolution that was approved earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Dronen then shared that **TrueNorth Educational Cooperative 804**, met on January 12th. Topics discussed included Covid staffing impacts, pre-forecast and forecast meetings, the Transition program, facilities, and cyber security.

Ms. Alcantara provided an update from the **New Trier Parents' Association (NTPA)** meeting on January 6th. The group discussed changes to the NTPA by-laws, updates to the block schedule, technology infrastructure, facilities including parking and logistics at the Winnetka campus and Covid mitigation efforts. The next meeting is scheduled for February 3rd.

Ms. Tomlinson shared information from the **New Trier Fine Arts Association (NTFAA)** which met on January 12th. Ms. Elizabeth Bennett, Music and Theatre Department Chair, confirmed that the school is planning to execute all events in person going forward while continuing to balance the risks and benefits to students. Ms. Tomlinson shared that she and her husband attended the Winter Music Festival. NTFAA president, Ms. Emily Marshall, chose 15 Fine Arts families and in working with Mr. Tragos, gathered information on how the block schedule is working for those students. Many of the themes were captured in Mr. Tragos' presentation earlier. Finally, NTFAA has awarded \$10,000 out of \$19,000 committed to grants and are likely to shift another \$4,000 from their financial assistance budget. That particular budget helps with travel costs and due to the pandemic, travel is less likely to happen.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following:

- It was one year ago that the District was working to set up its first vaccination clinic.
- Second semester starts next week.
- There are also a number of performances during February.
- The 39th Annual Jazz Festival will take place on February 5th, along with a number of Kinesis concerts and choral concerts.
- The next Board meeting is Tuesday, February 22nd.

There were no requests for Staff Research and Future Agenda Items.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

Cathleen Albrecht, President