

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
March 21, 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, March 21, 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
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
Dr. Chimille Tillery, Director of 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. Aileen Geary, Social Studies Department Faculty and New Trier High School Educational Association President; Ms. Sara Chao, Modern and Classical Languages Department Faculty; Mr. Eric Johnson, Technology Department; Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary; 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 March 21, 2022 of the Board of Education to order at 5:01 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus.

Roll call was taken, and all members were present, except for Mr. Das, who joined the meeting at 5:02 p.m.

Ms. Albrecht asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Ms. Hahn moved that the Board adjourn 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 setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District; the sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts; student disciplinary cases; and the placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students. Ms. Tomlinson seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, 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 March 21, 2022 of the Board of Education to order at 6:39 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Roll call was taken, and all members were present. In between closed and open sessions, the Board participated in the Board Recognition Program in C234.

IV. Minutes

Ms. Albrecht asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 22, 2022 (open and closed session). There were two requests for changes to the minutes by Ms. Hahn, which were incorporated. Ms. Hahn moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 22, 2022 (open and closed session), as revised. 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.

V. 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 Dr. Chimille Tillery, Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Ms. Albrecht reminded those speaking to keep their comments to three minutes or less per Board Policy 2:230. The school district expects mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct of all people in its buildings and on school property. Ms. Albrecht went on to remind guests that they are all part of this community and share this exceptional school district. Please respect each person's chance to speak without weighing in with approval or disapproval. Please refrain from clapping, booing, cheering or any similar actions related to anyone's public comment. There were five requests for public comment.

1. Mr. Peter Breen, former parent and substitute teacher, shared his positive experiences and observations as a substitute teacher. He also shared his thanks for everything that the District is doing.
2. Ms. Amanda Nugent, parent of graduate, shared observations about the public comments from the February 22, 2022 Board meeting, noting they were hurtful and discriminated towards the transgender community. She also shared the wonderful words stated by Mr. McLane at that same meeting. Ms. Nugent shared her experience as the parent of a transgender child. She also urged the staff, administration, and community to learn all they can, as well as include transgender children and their families in the process of what can be done to support these students.
3. Ms. Christine Pope shared comments about the election of school board members. After sharing her concerns, she noted that she wants to make sure that the school board remains an impartial, well-meaning group of people.
4. Ms. Penny Weis, former student and parent, shared comments about a diversity day and those who would not allow their students to attend. She wanted more information on the size of that group. Ms. Albrecht replied that public comment is not a back and forth, but rather where the public can address the Board. Dr. Sally also shared that he would give Ms. Weis a call to discuss this further.
5. Mr. Jim Mathers, former parent, shared comments on critical race theory.

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:

- On March 11th, the Freshman Concert Band and Varsity Wind Ensemble went to the Elmhurst University Concert Band Festival. This was the first time that the freshmen and sophomore band students were able to travel off campus since the beginning of the pandemic. Both bands played for a panel of music educators and college conductors, who provided written comments on the performance. Afterwards, each band received a 40-minute clinic with a panelist. This helped them to prepare for their concert at New Trier on Tuesday, March 15th.
- The Frosh/Soph musical, Puffs, took place in the McGee Theatre.
- RAK (Random Acts of Kindness) Week took place March 14th – 18th, sponsored by the Northfield Pep Club. Posters were hung around the school, there was a writing challenge as well as a pay it forward adviser room challenge. Teachers handed out "Caught You Being Kind" cards to students who could redeem them for candy. Students also wrote thank you notes to teachers, staff, and fellow students.
- There was a Collection of Kindness Drive, sponsored by Pep Club and Tri Ship who partnered with Northfield adviser rooms. Toiletry items were collected and 50 boxes of them were donated to the Northfield Food Pantry.
- Girls Club had a Shamrock Shake sale and proceeds were donated to a shelter for moms and babies in Lima, Peru. One club member has family in Peru that organizes the shelter and who's uncle is a pediatrician there. The funds will provide a water heater and refrigerator for the shelter.
- Mr. Waechtler shared pictures of students enjoying March Madness and crafts in the library.

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

- Last year, Concert Choir was asked to attend and perform at the Illinois Music Education Association, which is a top honor. Due to Covid, they were unable to attend. Instead, they performed recently at the Alice Millar Chapel in Evanston and Mrs. Dubravec shared pictures from their concert.
- Forty-one DECA students recently competed in an event including competitions in areas such as business marketing, finance, accounting applications, business law and ethics. Of those students, 22 earned Top 10 medals, and 14 qualify for the Illinois Career Development Conference in April, which is a national conference that will be held in Atlanta. Mrs. Dubravec thanked the sponsors, Mr. Bob Bollweg, Business Education Department Faculty; Ms. Melissa Duffy, Career Services Coordinator; and Ms. Sara Burnett, Business Education Department Faculty for their work.
- In January and February, German students participated in the Virtual German High School Day competitions at UIC. Several students placed first and third places for a video commercial, third place in the cultural essay competition and second place in the city guide presentation. Students did this voluntarily and spent their own time competing. Other students were recognized on the National German Exam with 15 earning gold medals, 15 earning silver and 15 earning bronze for outstanding performance.
- Mrs. Dubravec shared an audience sing-along clip from *Mamma Mia!*
- Mrs. Dubravec also acknowledged Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications, and Ms. Liz Mayer, New Trier Educational Foundation's Executive Director for their work with the Alumni Hall of Honor Class of 2022. She noted that a student dance group and a set of student musicians performed prior to the dinner at the Alumni Gala. Mrs. Dubravec went on to share about one honoree, Mr. Chad Bernstein, who visited with Mr. Nic Meyer's, Music and Theatre Department Faculty, Jazz students.
- Lastly, Mrs. Dubravec shared that a dodge ball tournament will be held in the near future. There will also be the 1st Annual Trevian March Madness Fundraiser. Adviser rooms are participating along with departments. Donations were collected and those participating decided that 50% of all proceeds would be donated to Habitat. The winning adviser room will receive a trophy, along with breakfast and a t-shirt.

Dr. Tillery provided an update from Curriculum and Instruction about newly tenured teachers. The 12 teachers remained full-time through the four-year probationary period and are now set to earn tenure. The group has over 150 years, collectively, of teaching and leading experience. After sharing other comments, Dr. Tillery noted these teachers participated in the New Teacher Induction Program, have been through the rigorous supervision and evaluation process, persevered through a pandemic, while also engaging in professional development opportunities.

Mr. Johnson gave the FOIA report, noting that there were eight requests since the last Board meeting, and all are closed. The topics related to curriculum objections, construction documents, emails and other documents, information on retirees, copy of District insurance information and mid-year graduates.

B. 2021-2022 School Year Update

Dr. Sally gave an update on the 2021-2022 school year. He began by noting that the Board approved the new block schedule and department leaders are working with Assistant Principals to schedule students for next year. Dr. Sally noted that the full-year calendar will be brought to the April Board meeting for approval. The start date, end date and vacations have already been approved. Still under discussion is the timing of final exams, early dismissal paired days and Freshman Go-to-School Night.

Regarding Covid, the mask transition occurred on February 23rd and has gone quite well. Masks continue to be available for any student or staff member who would like one. Dr. Sally noted the transition was more than just about masks, it was taking care of students and staff members as anxiety increased as the District moved to mask optional. The District continues to monitor Covid and its variants and cases should continue to be reported to Health Services. The District also continues its voluntary testing, though participation numbers have significantly decreased. He noted that meetings will also continue for the Covid Reentry and Community Wellness Team (CRCWT) through the rest of the school year.

Mr. McLane inquired of Mr. Johnson, how the District tracks the hospitalization data on a regional level. Mr. Johnson replied that the District looks at Northwestern University's dashboard and hospitalization is one of its metrics. There are also two healthcare professionals from NorthShore Health System on CRCWT and they report hospital capacity at each meeting. Dr. Sally added that there is also a pediatrician on CRCWT who is able to report real-time trends.

C. Benchmarking Consortium and Large High Schools Consortium Updates

Dr. Sally began this item by presenting on the Consortium 2034 meeting. Mr. Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, and Dr. Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services, traveled to California for the meeting. This consortium of schools has met twice a year for over a decade.

Dr. Sally began by noting that the name, Consortium 2034, changes yearly, as it is titled for the year that current kindergarteners will graduate from high school. The title keeps the group future focused as New Trier has with its New Trier 2030 strategic plan. Dr. Sally displayed the schools that participate in the Consortium, noting they are from Minnesota, Omaha, Dallas, Austin, and the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas. The Consortium was formed in 2008 and schools have changed occasionally. Each of the schools is similar to New Trier as high performing high schools with comparable community profiles. Meetings over the years have focused on college admissions, mental health, community relations, special education programs and preparation for college. He noted that the professional connections that have been made at each level are very important. The superintendents and other work-alike groups also meet monthly via Zoom. This gives the group an opportunity to problem-solve around various issues as well as plan for the next conference. The conferences include sharing innovations and ideas developing at each school with the host school often hosting a facility tour. During the group's last visit to New Trier, they were able to see the completed West Side project and Dr. Sally is excited to welcome them back in the near future to see the East Side project as well. For this meeting, special education administrators were included, typically only superintendent and curriculum administrators attend. He noted that all of these schools are spending a lot of time, energy, and money to try and problem-solve around the growing issue of serving their special education students.

Dr. Sally then walked through the various topics that were discussed during the most recent Consortium, hosted by San Mateo. They included re-engaging students and staff after Covid, curriculum adoption and challenges, the block schedule, staffing and programming, community relations as well as hiring. He noted there was much discussion about student mental health. The group also reflected on moving systems, staffing and programming from individual silos to an integrated whole.

Dr. Panopoulos then shared her experience attending the Consortium for the first time. She noted it was a nice opportunity to understand the special education programs at other schools and how they are working to break down the silos previously mentioned. Dr. Panopoulos shared that discussions also focused on how each year the accountability increases for Special Education regarding compliance with the state and federal laws. The group shared resources, processes and ways in which school is partnering, at a greater depth, with parents.

Next, Dr. Panopoulos spoke to the reliance on multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) in the consortium schools. After further comments, she noted it was eye-opening learning ways in which other schools are supporting not only their special education students, but general education ones as well. Many of these schools are embracing their equity goal by including their special education students throughout their academic and extracurricular program including "Unified" extracurricular and athletic activities which include both general ed and special ed students. These discussions provided insight into how we can expand our curricular and extracurricular offerings in this manner.

Next, Dr. Panopoulos shared about Dr. Shashank Joshi, who spoke on the topic of mental health. Dr. Joshi is a professor of psychiatry at Stanford University's School of Medicine. He shared his learning over the past ten years, as well as some items for schools to be thinking about given the past two years. Dr. Joshi also shared his work on suicide and suicide prevention as he worked with a number of clusters in the California area. Dr. Sally noted that these discussions provided a lot of information, and the District will be looking for ways to incorporate this information into its programs.

Mrs. Dubravec and Mr. Waechtler have been part of this consortium in the past, however, Mrs. Dubravec noted the differences of being a building principal focus on day-to-day operations and student issues. The schools who are part of the Consortium generally have smaller high schools, so that led Mrs. Dubravec to work with a new Large High School Consortium which includes high schools with a student population similar to New Trier's. In the fall, the group met in Colorado and this spring this meeting was held in Wayzata and Minnetonka, Minnesota. She shared the other schools in the Consortium and how the group may expand its reach. New Trier will host the group in the fall. This is a new group, and they are working to identify topics and speakers.

This group also tours the host's facilities and part of this tour was looking at the innovation at the research lab at Minnetonka High School. Mrs. Dubravec shared pictures and details of the lab and the overarching Minnetonka High School's Vantage Program. There are eight strands in which a student can enroll. In that strand students take two

courses, listen to speakers in the strand and are mentored by a professional at an organization in that strand. The students create a project that they work on for that organization through an outside internship. Mrs. Dubravec then displayed pictures of the classroom and collaborative spaces used for the program. The program ran out of space at the high school, so they renovated an office space as well. She also noted some of the positive comments shared by students. Mrs. Dubravec then provided pictures of the two indoor hockey rinks that are located on campus.

She then spoke to interesting programs Minnetonka High School had that New Trier may want to think about such as the Academic Mentor Program, which is similar to New Trier's Academic Assistance Center with student tutors. With Minnetonka's program students can go to a central location for help or a student tutor would go into the classroom. Minnetonka also has an ACT Prep Seminar that is taught by students. Finally, they just started a program called Tonka Prep, which supports students of color, academically and social emotionally. The group does community outreach programs while building positive relationships. She went on to share additional details about the program. Mrs. Dubravec noted that New Trier is always looking for positive programs it could use and shares its successful programming, as well. Dr. Sally added that these Consortiums allow the District to have connections with about 15 schools from around the country. He also noted that the District is working on its Innovation Hub with a Project of Excellence and the New Trier Educational Foundation and it will be important to connect with Minnetonka to learn more. Dr. Sally then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Alcantara confirmed that the presentation would be posted, which Dr. Sally affirmed. Ms. Alcantara inquired if New Trier is the only school in the Consortium that is set up with K-8 districts with the high school district separate; she also inquired about school systems in Illinois in general. Dr. Sally replied that Illinois is unique in the number of high school-only districts it has, but they do exist elsewhere. Regarding the Benchmarking Consortium, only one other, San Mateo, is a high school-only district, the rest are K-12. He noted that the issues discussed the most by the group are the high school ones. Ms. Alcantara commented that adding Stuyvesant would be another high school-only district, which Dr. Sally confirmed. He then inquired of Mrs. Dubravec if the schools in her Consortium are high school-only, to which she replied they are K-12 schools. She also noted that most of the time is spent on high school issues. Ms. Alcantara inquired if any of the schools are magnet or if they are all open enrollment schools. Dr. Sally replied that none are magnet schools and that each state is different. For example, Minnesota offers school choice, meaning that a student can go to a school other than their home district, a structure that is similar to Texas. Dr. Sally noted they are not magnet schools like Stuyvesant or some of the Chicago Public Schools.

Mr. McLane shared that he is a huge fan of this and loves that New Trier participates as well as expanded to large high schools. He also noted that someone else is already grappling with the problems and challenges that New Trier has, and the District can learn from others.

Mr. McLane inquired why there were no schools from the Northeast part of the country. Dr. Sally noted that there have been some over the years, but schools sometimes choose to no longer participate. The Benchmarking Consortium is not against adding schools from other parts of the country, but they have also decided to stay at the current size because it is efficient and allows for the building of strong relationships. He also shared that as new superintendents are hired, they can decide if their school participates or not. Mr. McLane noted that he would continue to encourage including a school from the Northeast as he believes that an entire perspective is being missed.

Mr. Dronen inquired if those in the Consortium have the same philosophy regarding Advanced Placement (AP) tests as New Trier. Dr. Sally replied that it varies, with more of them supporting students taking as many APs as they can. Mrs. Dubravec shared that the approach in schools included in the Large High Schools Consortium is similar, but they also do not have the high honors or level four classes like New Trier. She said their options are college prep or AP, so they do not have the same opportunities for students like New Trier.

Mr. Dronen thought the comments about special education were spot on, such breaking down silos, and bringing special education to the general education environment with benefits for both. He noted that special education is expensive and will continue to be. He shared that the state as well as New Trier will have to look for solutions down the road to maintain high quality special education but do so in an affordable manor. He also noted that Mr. Kurt Schneider, TrueNorth Superintendent, is supportive of some of these concepts.

Ms. Hahn applauded the commitment to continuous improvement. She commented that New Trier could be tempted to sit on its laurels as a beacon high school, so the commitment to getting and sharing new ideas is important. Ms. Hahn then inquired as to the criteria a school must meet to be included in the Benchmarking Consortium. Dr. Sally replied that they are high performing schools with students who have similar post-high school experiences. These

schools are also located in suburban, affluent communities facing the same challenges. He noted that is what brings this particular group together, acknowledging there are many ways to bring groups of schools together.

Ms. Tomlinson noted it was a good presentation and some of the items discussed, such as leadership opportunities, are already being done at New Trier, but shared that perhaps the school could have more of them. Referencing the eight strands of the Vantage Program, she noticed many private companies and thought it may be an opportunity for the school to work with community companies in developing something like this.

Ms. Tomlinson then referenced Dr. Panopoulos' comment that programs are not therapy but can be therapeutic. For Ms. Tomlinson it spoke to the theme of "everybody, everywhere" and that it should not be just a program for mental health, but rather it is integrated everywhere such as Kinetic Wellness, the Adviser Program and in the classroom. She noted that this was very compelling to her and shared her appreciation for the presentation.

Ms. Albrecht inquired if this was the first time that the Large High School Consortium met, to which Dr. Sally replied it was the second meeting with Mrs. Dubravec sharing the last meeting was at Cherry Creek School District. Ms. Albrecht shared that it was great the Consortium 2034, who has been gathering for several years, was able to meet again in-person. Ms. Albrecht then reflected on when the Consortium visited New Trier in 2019. She joined a tour of the Winnetka Campus with Consortium members and noted their energy. Ms. Albrecht shared that they were impressed with the new Applied Arts space as well. She also noted that one focus was how grateful the District is to the community for their financial support through their property taxes as some of the other schools have not had the same experience. This support allows the District to focus on education and innovation immediately and is a tribute to the community.

D. 2021-2022 Annual Plan Update and Look Ahead

Dr. Sally provided an update on the 2021-2022 Annual Plan. The Strategic Plan and the Annual Planning process has been essential to keeping the District moving forward in directions that matter to it during COVID. He noted that during this time, bandwidth has been needed to open school and keep it open, so although the District has not been able to accomplish as much, it continues to keep the District going in the right direction. This year's Annual Plan had a motto of Reconnecting, Reclaiming, and Reinventing. Dr. Sally provided a graphic listing the ways in which these three items have been accomplished. Dr. Sally referenced the number of new course proposals that departments submitted as they continued to think about what to do for students and how to innovate, which occurred in October. This was not long after the start of the school year after the conclusion of a hybrid school year. This is a testament to faculty and the work that they do.

Next, Dr. Sally walked through the six different frameworks, noting the strategy being worked on and its update. Those highlighted in green indicated those items that had a good amount of work done, while orange represented an item that needs more attention. This is not surprising and is part of the flexibility of the Annual Plan.

The Characteristics of a New Trier Graduate, in the Intellectual Engagement, Growth and Readiness framework, is one of those items that will be emphasized in next year's Annual Plan. For the framework of Student Personal Growth, Engagement, and Well-being, the teaching of executive functioning skills to freshmen went well, though it can also be improved for next year. A lot of work went into Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and changing the mindset of the school into "Everyone, Everywhere." Dr. Sally mentioned that in the 2022-2023 school year, one goal will be the next evolution of student support services, noting the silos that Dr. Panopoulos shared earlier and how those resources are brought together.

Regarding Culture, Climate, and Equity, the District's overall approach has been shifted to "Belonging Through A Culture of Dignity." It is the way the District talks about its equity work while also ensuring that all students feel like they belong at New Trier. An Institute Day for staff also emphasized this topic. Other work included the Adviser Gender Structure and monthly observances programming. There was also good work done in Adviser Room about Brave Spaces where various viewpoints are shared and respected. These spaces may be uncomfortable but are needed to feel that discomfort while continuing to engage.

In the framework, Leadership Across the School, there are many different pieces that have occurred through the principals and others in the school. There have been great programs for students as well as leadership development of staff. Work will continue in this area next year. In the framework, Community Engagement, Partnerships, and Governance, Alumni Engagement has been a great success this year in collaboration with the New Trier Educational Foundation and the new software that the school has. The Engagement of Families with Younger Children could

return to a focus on in-person events. This group also made great effort the first year in developing a publication that introduces 8th graders to New Trier. The Parent and Community Advisory Group will re-engage and review what has been done as well as look forward to the 2022-2023 school year.

The final framework, Finance, Facilities, and Human Resources, highlighted the continued facilities work in the midst of Covid, including not only the East Side project, but the work that has taken place in the north and tower buildings as well. Finance continues to have a balanced budget and use taxpayer money effectively and efficiently. Another highlight includes an onboarding program for support staff created by the Human Resources department. Dr. Sally also mentioned the importance of those community members who were classroom supervisors during the hybrid year. Many of them have now become substitutes for the school. They were part of the reason that New Trier could remain open during the January surge and have become ambassadors for the school.

The administrative team had a good moment when reflecting on all that has been done so far this year. Reviewing the increase in collaboration, the partnerships with the community, the partnerships with the associations and their leadership, was an uplifting moment. The team was able to celebrate as this work has moved items forward for students and families. Ms. Albrecht then asked for questions or comments from the Board.

Ms. Tomlinson spoke to the strategy of “under promise and over deliver,” which Dr. Sally did not do. She stated that when plans for the year were presented to the Board, at least three members, she noted, said that the District was taking on a lot. Ms. Tomlinson noted her disbelief for all that has collectively been done, which Dr. Sally noted included all 700 of New Trier’s staff members.

Ms. Tomlinson inquired how this work will be publicized to community members, taxpayers, and parents. Dr. Sally replied that the Annual Report has some information in it, but it is hard to get into all the details. He also noted that he believes more people are watching the Board meetings now that they are streamed, and the District tries to highlight items along the way. Discussion continued between Dr. Sally and Ms. Tomlinson.

Ms. Hahn shared her thanks for the report and hard work. She referenced how she has spoken, in various forms, about how important the 2030 plan was to keeping the District on track and moving forward. Ms. Hahn said kudos to everyone who was responsible for bringing that to New Trier as it has been an invaluable tool. Referencing the three R’s, Ms. Hahn shared she was also a proponent for a fourth one – rejuvenation. She hoped that people would take the upcoming spring break as a chance to rejuvenate, so they can continue to show up for students and the community by taking care of themselves. Ms. Hahn also shared how touched she was by Mr. Breen, who shared his experience as a sub during public comments. She inquired if this group of people have been recognized as it is a community group that deserves to be singled out for their heroic effort to come into school for students, whether they had children in the building or not. She would love to see them get some recognition. Dr. Sally responded to one of Ms. Hahn’s first points, noting that he hopes the District has listened well to where students and staff are at in terms of emotion and energy. He noted that changes have been made along the way, which creates some stress, but hopefully, overall, the change is relieving that stress. Dr. Sally provided examples such as offering personal learning time for students as well as adjusting professional development time for faculty.

Ms. Albrecht noted that the past couple of years have been rough, but that the District has done a good job. She then shared an anecdote about when she and one of the lawyers were leaving after a negotiation session. The lawyer said that “New Trier really does do things differently.” Ms. Albrecht inquired as to how, and the lawyer responded that it is collaboration. As difficult as Covid has been, Ms. Albrecht believes that it is that foundation of collaboration, that is who New Trier, is that got the school back and moving forward and focusing on other items. For Ms. Albrecht, it was conducting the adviser room survey. She noted it is a phenomenal institution because everyone does pull together for the students and community. She also referenced the parents and the community being room supervisors and liking that so much that they became subs, which was very important to the allowing the school to function when others were out with Covid. She also shared examples of the saliva testing last year and parents dropping off samples. Ms. Albrecht concluded that everyone is important, and New Trier is a great community. She looks forward to the next couple of months as well as next year.

E. Facilities Update: Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project and Transition Facility

Mr. Johnson provided an update on the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project (ESSA). The demolition work will be finished soon with earth retention complete and excavation on-going. Concrete work has begun in preparation for the steel work in April. During this work, the last piece of steel that went up during the construction of the Gates Gym was found. It is tradition to sign these pieces during construction, so it was a nice

historical part to uncover. The signed steel beam will remain and be covered up once again as it supports classrooms and offices. Mr. Johnson expressed his gratitude to the community for their patience during this work. He noted that there were a couple of complaints to the school about dust and it worked with Pepper Construction to rectify the issue. Mr. Johnson went on to show several other photos, describing each.

The monthly construction report is posted to BoardDocs and is similar to what was provided during the west side construction project. It provides visibility into the accomplishments, upcoming work, and unexpected situations. A project budget summary is also included in the report. This allows the Board and the community to monitor the project and its funds. The report also tracks change orders which occasionally occur due to unforeseen situations. These changes orders are allocated in the budget. The Board will be asked during the Consent Agenda to approve a resolution to allow the administration to manage the change order process, which is similar to the resolution that was approved for the last major construction project. The Board will continue to be consulted through the Facilities Steering Committee, and through the Board President if something unexpected occurs. The District will report on a monthly basis through the Construction Report.

Next, Mr. Johnson provided a brief overview of the Special Education Transition Program. The District offers this program to graduates, aged 18-22 who qualify for services. This is a requirement under Illinois law and aligns with the District's mission. Students are part of the Educational Life Skills (ELS) program which focuses on a smooth transition to adulthood. The program has around 35 students in it and is housed at the Winnetka Campus. Most districts in the area have moved their programs off-site due to the type of activities and jobs that students participate in. The move off-site allows students to best develop and generalize skills in a more authentic environment. Students work with staff to develop independent living skills and many have jobs in the community or at school. In consultation with teachers, special education leaders and facilities staff, a list of requirements was developed. The District retained a realtor with non-profit experience and dozens of properties within District boundaries were reviewed. A property for lease in downtown Glencoe, 640 Vernon, was chosen and formerly housed a Coldwell Banker office. The space will have a retail shop selling Trevian gear as well as job training activities. It is 5800 square feet and requires minimal renovation. The cost of renovation will be included in the District's 15-Year Plan budget. The yearly operating expenses are estimated at \$263,000 to be funded by the District's existing budget and grants restricted to Special Education. The existing staff and faculty will work at the new location. The District is proposing a five-year lease, up for approval in the Consent Agenda, with two additional renewal periods. The rate is favorable compared to what is seen in the community with two percent increases locked in for 15 years if the District selects the renewal periods. The District tentatively plans to renovate the space in two phases with the site opening to students in the fall of 2022. The District is excited about the opportunities that this space will provide for students. There will also be a presentation from Special Education leaders and teachers in the coming months. Dr. Panopoulos had nothing further to add and invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen inquired if change orders were at the same pace as the west side project. Mr. Johnson replied that change orders are at a slower pace for this current project. He noted that there is more exposure during the demolition but the change orders at a lower pace and lower dollar amount. The District is also starting with a higher percentage of contingency than in the previous project.

Mr. Dronen thanked the Glencoe community, trustees, and village manager for their openness in having the program, which will not only benefit Glencoe, but the entire township. Regarding the retail space in the building, Mr. Dronen asked what other visions the District has for that space, and if before it is designed, inquired if more input is needed so it is built properly. Dr. Panopoulos replied that Ms. Megan Zajac, Director of Special Education, and the Transition team have started discussions about what would be done with the space and what that would look like for phase one. Conversations have focused on having an additional location of the One Stop Trev Stop and, if not competing with other coffee shops in the area, the Brew Crew may also utilize the space. Mr. Johnson added that the District would like to keep the space flexible and adaptable for not only the students of today, but tomorrow as well. Mr. Dronen cautioned against rushing into anything and encouraged that the space be well thought out to fit its purpose as well as be adaptable.

Mr. Dronen referenced the Annual Plan and noted that this item was not included but is a significant piece for the 15-year facilities project as well as the equity goals. After sharing additional comments, Mr. Dronen encouraged, moving forward, that any Special Education inclusion ideas should be added to the District's equity goals so there is more exposure for the public. Mr. Johnson added that one of Dr. Panopoulos' big focus has been to help Transition students get into more job sites and out into the community. This space will be a better home base for these students, rather than going back to a classroom, and who are already doing great things in the community.

Mr. McLane inquired if the Monthly Construction Report would also be included on the website and not just on BoardDocs. Mr. Johnson replied that he and Ms. Dizon would add it to the project's page on the website.

Ms. Hahn thanked Mr. Johnson and his team for the tenacity of finding this location. She shared that she thinks the District found a great space. Ms. Hahn then asked for clarification about if the Transition students will not be spending 100% of their time at this space and if they would be back at the Winnetka campus at all. Mr. Johnson replied that this is a home base for the students and is different than a high school program as they do not necessarily report to school at the same time each day. Some students will be at the location working on skill development while others are at jobs in the community. Mr. Johnson shared his thanks to Dr. Panopoulos, Ms. Zajac, and the teachers for being open to this and spending a lot of time working on it. Dr. Panopoulos helped move this program off-site at her last district, so her experience was invaluable. Mr. Johnson met with each of the village managers to discuss the District's needs and the benefits of having this program in the community. All were open to it and responded to Mr. Johnson with potential sites within their respective communities. Sites were looked at in each community. Ms. Hahn noted that it has been a pleasure to hear about its progress and shared it has been a nice, positive item to focus on over the past few months.

Regarding the change orders, Ms. Albrecht inquired, what the threshold was for the west side project in 2015. Mr. Johnson replied that it was \$100,000 and now it is \$500,000. Mr. Johnson noted that it would be rare to have a change order anywhere near that because the value is being looked at on each contract. He shared that there was one for \$300,000 for asbestos and was important for the District to keep the work moving. Ms. Albrecht noted the importance of having asbestos remediation immediately. Ms. Albrecht then asked to be reminded of the process, noting that each month a report is received of the change orders over a certain threshold. Mr. Johnson will confirm that number and went on to share that the report will have the total aggregate dollar amount, a summary of each change order as well as what potential future change order amounts might be. Ms. Albrecht noted that they are necessary change orders because a new situation becomes apparent. It is not a situation of determining how much of particular piece of the project can be completed or not, such as the green roof in the last project. Mr. Johnson replied that that sort of item would come to Board for further discussion. Mr. Johnson explained that the difference between this project and the last is that the District is starting with a higher percentage available for change orders and last time, the District was looking to bring the benefit of that project to the students as soon as possible to avoid construction inflation. He went on to share that there were elements of design that were being done from the change order budget as the project was going on, which resulted in large change orders. This time, the District has done almost all of that work before the project even started, so that type of risk from change orders is minimized. Ms. Albrecht suggested that if something comes up for over \$100,000 that the Board be notified so it knows what to expect. Mr. Johnson responded that the District would continue to do so. To follow-up, Mr. Dronen noted that the Board would have most of the change orders, but once demolition is complete, unless the District makes changes such as to the design or suggests additions, the Board should not expect as much. Mr. Johnson confirmed and noted that each change order is coded. Although Mr. Johnson cannot speak to what may come in the future, the District reviewed what caused a significant number of change orders with the last project. It has worked to alleviate those factors in this project, but he cannot promise that there will not be something significant in the future.

VII. Administrative Items

A. Treasurer's Report for February 2022

Mr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for February 2022. The District is seeing regular receipts at the local, state, and federal level. On time payments from the state continues, along with the dispersal of federal funds which is done by the state. The District is also seeing consistent local revenue with local property taxes coming in in a timely fashion. The fund balance for all accounts is \$154,529,237. Interest rates continue to be low, but new funds that are received now are being invested at higher rates, so the District will see an increase in interest rate earning.

B. Financial Reports for February 2022

Mr. Johnson presented the Financial Reports for February 2022, the eighth month of fiscal year, so the District is beginning to get an overall sense of the year. The District continues to monitor variances due to COVID as well as analyze the inflationary impact on the budget.

Operating revenue for the first eight months of the year was \$80,010,952, or 16.97% higher compared to last year. This is due to the timely payments at the local, state, and federal level. Other local sources will continue to have the year-long positive variances as discussed each month. The District received \$21.5 million in property taxes in spring

distributions with March already shaping up to be a good month for revenue distributions as well. The adopted budget showed operating revenue as 5.34% higher than last year.

Operating expenditures were \$75,621,313 through February. Exclusive of interfund transfers, expenses were 5.88% higher than last year. Some of this is to be expected as the District's normal programs are running so expenses are happening at times they typically occur. The District is also watching the inflationary impact on items such as supplies, materials and fuel costs. These will be studied carefully as the District gets into the final months of its fiscal year. The adopted budget for operating expenditures is slightly higher than last year, so the District is looking to have this hopefully level out as it gets to the last several months of the year. Fund book balances for all accounts were \$156,540,246 through the end of February. Mr. Johnson invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Hahn noted that in the Treasurer's Report, it states that tax receipts are being paid out timely, she inquired if the state has addressed the issues it was having earlier. Mr. Johnson replied that this is the first installment of the 2021 taxes and is the levy the District filed last November. He explained that levy goes to Cook County and they issue everyone a tax bill for 55% of the prior year's tax bill. The second tax bill requires a true-up for one's balance. The assessor will then report what the assessed value is of all property in Cook County. They then do calculations to determine a person's share of the remaining balance, which is about 45%, but is adjusted based on the value of one's property. The assessor's office is undergoing a computer system upgrade, and along with Covid, are late in getting assessments done. Typically, the bills would go out in July or August and be due September 1st. This year, they may go out significantly later, which in turn will cause the second installment of taxes to be distributed later. The District will be watching this carefully from a cash flow perspective to make sure it has the funds aligned it needs for next year. Mr. Johnson is cautiously optimistic that they will find a way to solve the problem. He went on to share additional details around this. Ms. Hahn noted that while Mr. Johnson is cautiously optimistic, the District should potentially anticipate a delay, which he confirmed. Ms. Hahn inquired if he was confident that New Trier can weather a delay, which he also confirmed. Mr. Johnson noted that the District is fortunate to have the resources that the community provides it. The District can go through a several month delay in receiving its tax bills as that is what its reserves allow it. The District went through a cash flow analysis last week and is being careful that the cash will be available when paychecks begin for teachers and support staff in the fall. The District also needs to be ready for a significant bond payment that is due in December. Discussion will also take place with the Finance Committee as well.

Mr. Dronen noted that the District has a significant portion of its reserves in cash and there was a fed increase of 25 basis points last week with an indication of several more this year. He expects that the District will start to build out its CD ladder again on the cash reserves. Mr. Johnson confirmed this and said the Board will start to see that next month.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- Bill List for the Period, February 1 – 28, 2022
- Personnel Report (Scale IV Movement, Scale IV Review, Tenure, Appointments, Change of Status, Dismissals, Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements, Stipends – Appointment and Stipends – Separation)
- Resolution Authorizing the Dismissal of Non-tenured Teachers
- Resolution Authorizing the Honorable Dismissal of Teachers
- Resolution Authorizing the Honorable Dismissal and Recall of Teachers
- Board Policy Revisions – PRESS 108 – Second Reading
- Resolution Regarding Approval of Change Orders for the 2022-2023 Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project
- IHSA Renewal 2022-2023
- Approval of lease with Connor – Max LLC – 640 Vernon and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute.

Ms. Albrecht inquired if any members wanted to pull an item off the Consent Agenda, no one chose to do so. Ms. Alcantara moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: Bill List for the Period, February 1 – 28, 2022; Personnel Report (Scale IV Movement, Scale IV Review, Tenure, Appointments, Change of Status, Dismissals, Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements, Stipends – Appointment and Stipends – Separation); Resolution Authorizing the Dismissal of Non-tenured Teachers; Resolution Authorizing the Honorable Dismissal of Teachers; Resolution Authorizing the Honorable Dismissal and Recall of Teachers; Board Policy Revisions – PRESS 108 – Second Reading; Resolution Regarding Approval of Change Orders for the 2022-2023 Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project; IHSA Renewal 2022-2023; Approval of lease with Connor – Max LLC – 640

Vernon and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute. Mr. McLane seconded the motion. 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.

IX. Board Member Reports

Mr. Das, while unable to attend the meeting, shared notes from the **Booster Club**, who are reporting a positive membership drive and increase in revenue to date. There were 70 student applicants for the Junior Board and applications are being reviewed. The Booster Bash is on May 6th with an auction opening online for that on May 2nd. There was also significant support and excitement around Mr. Fontanetta's, Athletic Director, Coaches Request for Equipment. The Booster Club will donate around \$88,000 worth of equipment from donor support.

Ms. Hahn shared that the **New Trier Educational Foundation (NTEF)** held their Alumni Achievement Gala. She noted it was wonderful to see the support of administrators, staff, and Board members in attendance. NTEF honored nine alumni. There was a Foundation meeting last Thursday, but they had not yet tallied their receipts, though it was considered a great success. They also look forward to repeating it, with some tweaks, in the future. She thanked those who attended, for the Foundation's work and for their continued partnership with the District.

Ms. Alcantara noted that the **Community Engagement Committee (CEC)** met on March 2nd. They discussed the Annual Report that was mailed out but shared it can also be found on the website. The group also discussed an update on the Gala as well as the Day of Service scheduled for April 23rd. Other updates included engaging with younger families now that Covid restrictions have relaxed, and in-person activities resume as well as visits to the sender schools. An update was also provided on upcoming public relations projects. The next meeting is scheduled for April 20th where the group will discuss next year's Annual Plan goals for the Community Engagement framework of New Trier 2030, continue work on engaging younger families and alumni, and begin the research phase for community partners and local governmental agencies.

Ms. Alcantara provided an update from the **New Trier Parents' Association (NTPA)** meeting on March 3rd, which she was not able to attend. Key topics of discussion included the NTPA sponsored parent coffees and events through the end of the school year, transitions for class board and preparations for them, as well as an end of school year NTPA gathering.

Ms. Alcantara noted that the **Board Policy Committee** meeting took place on March 8th and written communications to the Board were discussed.

Mr. Dronen shared that the **Finance Committee** met on March 14th. The committee discussed the Winnetka Campus East Side project along with two closed session items.

Mr. McLane shared that he attended the art show in the Brierly Gallery. He noted the work that the students had done was fantastic and acknowledged the support of their parents and teachers as well. He noted that scholarships were awarded and encouraged everyone to stop by to see the work.

Mr. McLane also shared how fun and engaging the Gala was, along with how caring and committed the alumni are to the success of the school.

Mr. McLane provided highlights from the **Facilities Steering Committee (FSC)**, noting that the steel trusses have been made. They are ten feet high by 35 feet long and weigh 80,000 pounds. He shared that Duke Childs work is moving in the right direction. Also discussed was the 15-Year Plan, summer of 2022 work with Mr. McLane's takeaway being solar energy. He shared additional comments on this topic.

Ms. Tomlinson thanked Mr. McLane for mentioning the art show and shared her interaction with one of the judges who noted he did not have enough awards to give. She also noted it was a great event.

Ms. Tomlinson also shared how great *Mamma Mia!* was and Mr. Dronen inquired if that show was recorded. Dr. Sally and Mr. Johnson replied that the District is not able to record it due to copyrighted material.

Next, Ms. Tomlinson shared from the **New Trier Fine Arts Association (NTFAA)** meeting, noting that Mr. Ethan Hoffman, a NTFAA student scholar, was able to attend the DePaul Tech Theatre and Design Program. He was also the stage manager for *Mamma Mia!* She went on to note that the teachers have the students create the stage based on their readiness and went on to share that some of the stage structure was soldered by the students. NTFAA decided to move more funds into grants, one of which was awarded to the Dance Division to run a week-long dance camp for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. This will allow for leadership opportunities for students running the camp as well as a chance for community outreach with younger students being able to experience New Trier. Finally, the First Thursday fundraiser date is April 7th and food trucks Soul and Smoke and La Cocinita will be in attendance. Ms. Alcantara inquired where the trucks would be with Ms. Tomlinson replying they will be at the Winnetka Campus. Mr. McLane noted that Soul and Smoke catered the New Trier rowing club event and is well worth it.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following:

- Next week is Spring Break.
- State testing will take place in April, so Dr. Sally encouraged people to follow the calendar for the blue/green schedule. The school will also make sure the app developed for the schedule has these days correct.

XI. Adjourn to Closed Session

Ms. Albrecht asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Ms. Tomlinson moved that the Board adjourn 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 setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District; the sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts; student disciplinary cases; and the placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students. Mr. Das seconded the motion. 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 at 8:37 p.m.

XII. Regular Meeting - Reconvened

Ms. Albrecht recalled to order the Open Session, Regular Business Meeting of the New Trier High School Board of Education of March 21, 2022, at 9:36 p.m. Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

Cathleen Albrecht, President