

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

**October 18, 2021**

**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, October 18, 2021, 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  
Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction  
Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal – Winnetka Campus  
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

**Also Present**

Dr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer; Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Ms. Aileen Geary, Social Studies Department Faculty and New Trier High School Educational Association President; Mr. Paul Easton, English Department Faculty; Mr. Matt Stuczynski, Library Department Faculty; Ms. Mary Mitchell, Special Education Department Faculty; Ms. Katherine Kapustiak, Application Support Specialist; Dr. Chimille Tillery, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Ms. Pat Savage-Williams, Special Education Department Coordinator and Equity Liaison; Ms. Kris Hummel, Student Assistance Program Coordinator; Ms. Teri Rodgers, Social Studies Department Faculty; Dr. Tim Hayes, English Department Faculty, Equity Liaison, and Student Activities Coordinator; Mr. Matt Mersch, Business Education Department Faculty; Ms. Dawn Sullivan, Applied Arts Department Faculty; Ms. Lisa Barbe, Psychologist; Ms. Jaylyn Stenta, Math Department Faculty; Mr. Cory Calmes, Special Education Department Faculty and Bridges Program; Ms. AnnMarie de Serpa, Social Studies Department Faculty and Special Education Department Faculty; Ms. Katie Kritek, Kinetic Wellness Department Faculty and Dance Coordinator; Mr. Paul Kim, Special Education Department Faculty and Math Department Faculty; Ms. Kate Fassnacht, Special Education Department Faculty; Mr. Bob Zigmund, Post-High School Counseling Department; Mr. Scott Williams, Assistant Principal for Student Services; Mr. Myron Spiwak, Director of Business Services; Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Mr. Eric Johnson, Technology Department; Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary; students, members of the press and community.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER – 5:30 p.m. – C234**

Ms. Albrecht called the Regular Meeting of October 18, 2021 of the Board of Education to order at 5:30 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus.

Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

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 collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees 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. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

**II. CLOSED SESSION – 5:30 p.m. – A303**

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

Ms. Albrecht recalled the Regular Meeting of October 18, 2021, 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.

### **IV. Minutes**

Ms. Albrecht asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 20, 2021 (open and closed session) and the Special Meeting of October 6, 2021 (open session). There was a request by Ms. Hahn for a change to the closed session minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 20<sup>th</sup> as well as requests for changes by Ms. Albrecht and Mr. Dronen for the open session minutes of the same meeting. All changes were incorporated. Mr. Das moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the minutes, as amended, of the Regular Meeting of September 20, 2021 (open and closed session), and the Special Meeting of October 6, 2021 (open 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 Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. There were five requests for public comment. Ms. Albrecht reminded those speaking to keep their comments to three minutes or less per Board Policy 2:230.

1. Ms. Shefali Nathan, parent, shared comments regarding equity for minority religions and their holidays. She spoke to the compromise between one's culture and the academic expectations of students. She shared comments in support of absolving students from their academic responsibilities during minority cultural and religious holidays.
2. Ms. Niyati Naveen, student, shared her experience as a student who celebrates Diwali. She noted that by excusing work for celebrating students, it removes the pressure and worry of when they would complete their assignments. She also shared comments that were collected from students, parents, and teachers regarding this. She noted that the comments would be sent to the Board.
3. Ms. Miya Hasegawa, parent, and volunteer member of Healing Everyday Racism in Our Schools (HEROS) spoke in support of and appreciation for New Trier's effort to promote a culture of belonging, specifically recent work to highlight the history and culture of different people.
4. Ms. Rebecca Canales, student, shared her experience as a Latina at New Trier.
5. Ms. Betsy Hart, parent and board member of New Trier Neighbors, shared comments about New Trier's Civil Discourse statement.

### **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:

- Homecoming Week was the last week of September.
- The Freshman Mixer took place with games and dancing. There was also a boys varsity soccer game that evening and many freshmen went to cheer the team on.
- Freshman Go-to-School Night was virtual this year with good attendance.
- EKG testing will take place next week in Kinetic Wellness (KW) classes.
- Interim Progress Reports were shared with students and parents the first week of October which included comments from each class about their transition to high school.

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

- It has been a good, but busy October as reconnecting continues.
- Pink shirts were printed by students in the ELS/Transitions program and sold in the One Stop Trev Shop for the Pink Out this past weekend.
- Special Olympics is in their volleyball season now.

- The Music and Theatre Department hosted a Parent Student Night at Winnetka. Parents were able to attend and watch a class. Mrs. Dubravec shared pictures and further details.
- Ms. Stacy Kolack, Student Activities Coordinator, other staff as well as students worked on New Trier's first Night Rally for Homecoming. Ms. Katie Kritek, Kinetic Wellness Department Faculty and Dance Coordinator, put a staff dance together that was performed.
- Fall athletics are coming to an end with Boys Golf placing second and Girls Golf placing fifth. Girls State Tennis is coming up. Boys Soccer and Volleyball are entering regionals as well as Swim and Dive. Field Hockey will be going into playoffs with State being hosted at New Trier.
- Mrs. Dubravec shared that the New Trier Parents Association (NTPA) and Athletics parents came together during Homecoming to arrange a tent with food.
- She shared that there are 70 seniors who took the PSAT last fall who were named as National Merit Commended Students and 21 students named as Semifinalists. Last year was unique due to Covid with 895,000 students taking the test, which is down from the usual 1.6 million. She thanked Mr. Alan Pavlik, Testing Manager, and Dr. Chimille Tillery, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, who ensured the test could take place last year. The 21 Semifinalists may go on to be Finalists, which will be announced in the late spring and early summer.

Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services, formally announced that the special education cooperative, NSSSED, has changed their name to True North Educational Cooperative. New Trier is a member, along with 17 other school districts. She shared additional details about supports True North offers. They have also requested that their badge be placed on New Trier's website.

Mr. Johnson gave the FOIA report, noting that there were four requests since the last Board meeting. Three are closed with one remaining open. Requests included information related to curricular materials, funds received under the American Rescue Plan and Covid stats. The open request is regarding unclaimed funds.

#### **\*B. FY 2021 Audit**

Mr. Johnson began the presentation on the fiscal year 2021 audit. This is the time when the audit is received for the previous fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2021. This year, the District welcomed Wipfli as auditor along with previous auditor, RSM, who was engaged on a consulting basis to implement new standards and to assist with financial reporting. Mr. Myron Spiwak, Director of Business Services, along with Mr. Andy Mace, partner at Wipfli, and his team worked together over the past few months on the audit.

Mr. Mace reiterated it is the first year that Wipfli is auditing New Trier. There was also a special arrangement this year in working with RSM. He noted that he is seeing more districts and local governments work with an outside CPA consulting firm as audits are very technical and it can be hard to stay current on those pieces unless that is all one does. He noted it was a pleasure to work with RSM and they helped the audit to go smoothly.

Mr. Mace explained his role as auditor, noting that he gains an understanding of the District's internal controls so audit tests can be designed. The auditor does not give an opinion on the internal controls as it is a much more involved process. Often, they provide observations or comments, of which, they had none this year for the District. Mr. Mace noted that Mr. Johnson, Mr. Spiwak, and their staff do an excellent job. The business office is well staffed in that the proper people are in the right positions, with good internal controls and segregation of duties. Wipfli does issue a Required Communications Letter which would inform of any disagreements with management, or any problems encountered in the audit, of which, there were none.

The financial report itself is the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, meaning New Trier puts in the extra effort to prepare the introductory and statistical sections. New Trier is one of 40 districts in the state to do so. The statements are submitted to the Association of School Business Officials International and the Government Finance Officers Association report award programs. This report has won the past sixteen years and Mr. Mace expects it to continue to do so. There are no financial surprises as good financial information is provided on a regular basis. Mr. Mace went on to point out a couple items related to pensions. The total net pension liability related to the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), just for New Trier, is close to half a billion dollars. The District's allocated share of that is in the range of \$5 million. The District also participates in the Teachers Health Insurance Security Fund (THIS), which is another postemployment benefit for certified employees to stay on healthcare until Medicare. Those numbers are large as well, but not as big as TRS. The total net other postemployment benefit liability related to New Trier is about \$138 million, and the District's share is about \$58 million. For THIS, the District contributes a

percentage of certified salaries into the program every year and Mr. Mace anticipates that it could tick upward. The report includes the financial statements, the individual fund statements, budgetary/actual/prior year comparisons, as well as historical trend information. At the beginning of the report is a Management's Discussion and Analysis section, which provides a good understanding of what went on financially within the District for the year. Mr. Mace then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Tomlinson wanted to clarify that the \$500 million liability is not the District's liability, but rather the state's obligation to pay, which Mr. Mace confirmed, noting there is a portion that the District recognizes, which is relatively small at \$5 million. Mr. Johnson commented that this is typical for all districts and how the state structures TRS. The state acts as the employer for TRS and makes those contributions on behalf of the teachers, which they have not made going back to the early 90s, hence the liability. On the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) side, which includes those who work in a school who are not certified, the actions that the Board has taken over the past several years have shown that the District has managed that well. Currently, the IMRF liability is a net asset because the Board paid down that liability in two chunks over the past five years, and that money has been invested in IMRF. The pension for noncertified employees is over 100% funded. Mr. Johnson noted this is within the District's control and steps have been taken to manage it. The District will continue to monitor TRS, but New Trier is in the same position as every other school district in the state. The fund in the District's control is very well managed on behalf of taxpayers by the Board.

Ms. Albrecht thanked Mr. Mace for the clean audit. She thanked Mr. Johnson, Mr. Spiwak, and the business office for all their work. She also shared comments on the pension issue in Illinois. Mr. Johnson also thanked Mr. Spiwak for his work in coordinating the audit with Mr. Mace and his team as well as RSM. Ms. Albrecht noted that the District has 16 straight years of certificates of excellence and inquired when the District would receive the next one, to which Mr. Johnson replied it takes a year and explained the process.

Mr. Das moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board accept the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and other related reports for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. 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.

### **C. Monthly Programming – Promoting a Culture of Belonging**

Dr. Sally shared introductory comments regarding the District's monthly programming of promoting a culture of belonging. He acknowledged the public comments heard earlier in the meeting regarding this programming. He noted the tremendous effort by students and staff along with his appreciation.

Dr. Tillery then began the presentation by sharing that the school wants students to always feel like they belong at New Trier. The school wants to ensure that students see those who are different than them around the building and in the curriculum. It is also important that students see themselves and their identity around the school and in the curriculum. The District also wants to foster a culture of dignity for New Trier students by providing experiences for students to feel appreciated, accepted and validated, while affirming differences and uniqueness. With belonging and dignity as values of the District, students will be prepared for the world outside of New Trier when they leave. Dr. Tillery noted that the purpose of this work is to create a culture of equity that appreciates and celebrates differences across the school.

Next, Ms. Pat Savage-Williams, Special Education Department Coordinator and Equity Liaison and Dr. Tim Hayes, English Department Faculty, Equity Liaison, and Student Activities Coordinator along with Mr. Chris Cruz, student, spoke on the monthly observances. Ms. Savage-Williams shared that these monthly observances are a way to help deepen understanding for everyone. It is also a way to focus on marginalized groups instead of having multiple conversations about multiple groups at the same time, thus the decision was made to use the National Monthly Observances to guide these conversations. September was Hispanic Heritage Month, which was well received. October is LGBTQ+ History Month and is currently underway. A toolkit has been created for each monthly observance and is highly accessible. Each observance also has a theme, for September, it was "Esperanza or Hope," while October's theme is "Making the invisible visible." Ms. Savage-Williams shared that one takeaway for her has been how much she has learned. She went on to share a graphic of the various activities available each month such as

seminars, the toolkit, information on the library webpage, displays, announcements, lunch and learns as well as curricular connections.

Dr. Hayes shared his experience with these months, noting he had the opportunity to facilitate the seminar lesson with students. In his role as Student Activities Coordinator, he helped to set up the Pilsen mural display at the Northfield campus. Finally, in his role as a freshman English teacher, he has utilized the toolkit to bring resources into the classroom to help frame the book students are reading.

Mr. Cruz thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and reflect on his perspective as a Latino/Latina student at New Trier. He spoke to an article in the New Trier News which shed light on Latino/Latina students at New Trier and is a great opportunity, for students like himself, to feel more comfortable and welcomed in classroom environments. He shared that these opportunities help students like him to not feel like outliers, that they are a part of the school and like everyone else.

Next, Ms. AnnMarie de Serpa, Social Studies Department Faculty and Special Education Department Faculty and Mr. Cory Calmes, Special Education Department Faculty and Bridges Program shared the Lunch and Learn they presented during Hispanic Heritage Month. The Lunch and Learn topic was *La Causa: Exploring the collective impact of Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, Carolina Franco, and United Farm Workers Past and Present*. Ms. de Serpa shared further details noting they led students and staff through interactive activities such as a thinking routine adapted from Harvard's Project Zero called "See, Think, Wonder."

Ms. Katie Kritek, Kinetic Wellness Department Faculty and Dance Coordinator, spoke on how she and her dance colleagues have created lessons in their studios in connection with the monthly seminar topics. She noted the tie-in is significant and has enhanced classes. She noted that focusing on diversity is not new for the Dance Division, they appreciate how the seminar months have guided and strengthened their curricular development. The Dance Division spent the summer working on a growth grant by focusing on finding new ways to embed a portion of the strategic plan, specifically culture, climate, and equity, directly into their curriculum. Ms. Kritek shared further details and examples from the growth grant work. The New Trier Fine Arts Association has generously offered the Dance Division grant money. The Dance Division decided to use the money to bring in as many guest artists as possible to teach authentic dances connected to the different seminar months. Two senior students, Ms. Lauren Van Neck and Ms. Luisa Struck, shared their perspectives on the curriculum and gave examples of what they have studied in their various dance classes.

Ms. Aileen Geary, Social Studies Department Faculty and New Trier High School Educational Association President, Mr. Paul Kim, Special Education Department Faculty and Math Department Faculty and Mr. Calmes spoke on LGBTQ+ History Month. Mr. Calmes noted that a toolkit was created as well as educational programming such as the Lunch and Learn with Glenview Youth Pride. He also shared that as the District celebrates and honors different racial, religious, and ethnic groups throughout the year, LGBTQ+ people exist in each of these groups even though they may seem invisible. Mr. Kim shared examples of resources and activities available in the toolkit. He also noted that while gathering resources for the toolkit, the group was cognizant that, like much of history, LGBTQ history is often seen through a white lens, so they made sure to include perspectives from people of color. Ms. Geary shared details about various LGBTQ+ history icons.

Dr. Tillery then shared a video of pictures of student work on display at both campuses in honor of the first two monthly observances. Ms. Savage-Williams and Dr. Hayes shared next steps. November will be Native American Heritage Month, with no observances in December and January to provide time to prepare for the second half of the year. During these two months, there will also be an evaluation of the work done so far. A survey will be sent in December to staff to gather feedback, with results reviewed in January. Ms. Savage-Williams shared final comments, noting that the resources from past monthly observances will be available to students and staff indefinitely. She shared that she is very pleased and highly impressed with the level of work and commitment of students, faculty, and staff. She thanked the Board for their time, noting that for marginalized groups to find a place of belonging in a school like New Trier is huge and as it continues to grow, it will impact the culture of the school. Dr. Tillery then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Dr. Sally thanked students and staff who have been involved. In thinking how this connects to the Strategic Plan, the District wants to make sure it does the best it can so that every student feels like they belong at New Trier. Second, the District wants to make sure that every student is ready for the world outside of New Trier. Dr. Sally also noted that during the months of December and January, feedback will also be gathered from students.

Ms. Hahn applauded the work, particularly the student contributions to the toolkits. She noted it is exciting to see that aspect of student leadership come to the forefront. She then wanted to confirm that the rotating seminar, as well as the other pieces, is somewhat voluntary for faculty and students. Dr. Tillery responded that it is mostly voluntary, though there are teachers who have brought their classes when there is a curricular connection. Dr. Sally noted that the additional curricular connection is meaningful for students. Ms. Hahn noted it was interesting to hear how this is brought to students who may not take the initiative to go. Ms. Hahn then inquired if the toolkits were curated for disciplines or if it is a large body of work that a particular teacher can choose what is relevant. Dr. Tillery shared that teachers would go through the resources and determine how they tie into their discipline and Ms. Savage-Williams added further comments. Ms. Hahn then inquired if the evaluation process during December and January will include what worked and what did not, which Dr. Tillery confirmed there would be reflection on what has been done, any changes or modifications that are needed, and what will be done in 2022. Dr. Hayes added that they will be looking for what was useful and what teachers wished they would have had.

Mr. McLane thanked the group for their presentation and work. He went on to note that during the 2030 planning process, he thought the belonging pillar, addressed today, was the most challenging strategic imperative. He noted that he did not know how it would be brought to life, but this group did it. They collectively created a great, multi-disciplinary activation that will enhance student understanding and lives. It is a start with iterations to come and very impressive.

Ms. Tomlinson echoed Mr. McLane's comments, noting that she also worked on the strategic plan. They parsed every word, but she noted those words are meaningless until they are put into action. She thanked the group for helping others embrace this goal, for giving up lunches and seeking out grants. Ms. Tomlinson also acknowledged the community members who came forward to share their concerns and hopes. She then inquired how it was determined which group would be focused on during which month. She also looks forward to hearing about the feedback on the program. Dr. Tillery explained that these are national monthly observances that are designated in the United States. This was in addition to thinking about the students in the building, the marginalized groups, and the Affinity Groups. Ms. Savage-Williams added that some of the months are scheduled a bit differently so two groups are not the focus in the same month. She also noted that this is a pilot year with much thinking, conversations and evaluation occurring. Ms. Savage-Williams shared additional comments regarding this.

Mr. Dronen noted it was a nice presentation and inquired about further details regarding the Dance Division's curricular components. Ms. Kritek responded that the classes go into the history and the cultural significance, a guest artist is also brought in. Resources are pulled from the Dance Division's own toolkit as well as the ones created for the monthly observances.

Ms. Albrecht thanked the group, noting the presentation was dynamic and energetic. She noted the energy required for this especially after returning from a non-routine school year last year as well as continuing to refine the block schedule and meet students where they are. Ms. Albrecht also noted that the learning and sharing of heritages and cultures is an important piece of developing the common culture at New Trier of belonging. Ms. Albrecht noted that in Dr. Tillery's memo, she was excited with the initial anecdotal feedback she has received from students. After reading from the memo, Ms. Albrecht inquired how this feedback would be gathered. Dr. Tillery replied that she is in the process of working on this, noting a new book she is reading that shares how to collect anecdotal feedback specifically related to equity work. She shared examples of who she might talk with to collect feedback.

Dr. Sally responded to Ms. Albrecht's comment recognizing the difficulty of doing this work after last year while still being in the midst of a pandemic. This is driven by teachers' and staff's dedication to students and understanding that there are students who need to feel like they belong at New Trier. Dr. Sally noted that the school has always tried to do better and believes that it has hit notes with this pilot that have started to resonate. The District needs to learn from that and keep building. The impact on students and hearing from them is when the school will know it is really making a difference.

#### **D. Student Services – Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

Dr. Panopoulos presented on Student Services – Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Dr. Sally shared that this was another essential and important component of what the District is trying to do this year in terms of supporting students.

Dr. Panopoulos introduced the other presenters: Ms. Megan Zajac, Director of Special Education, Ms. Lisa Barbe, Psychologist and Ms. Kate Fassnacht, Reading teacher, MTSS Coach and Special Education faculty. Dr. Panopoulos

gave context, noting that MTSS originated from Response to Intervention (RTI), which provided early intervention services for students, ensured that student needs matched the intervention, and was monitored over the course of time. Dr. Panopoulos shared that the broader context of MTSS emphasizes not only the whole student, but also all students. RTI has been at New Trier for the past ten years and over that time, the District has shifted its vocabulary to MTSS. Its tagline is “everyone, everywhere” and is the way that the school supports all of its students. The presentation would focus on MTSS and its connection to the strategic plan, defining and describing MTSS and continuing to build and sustain the work.

MTSS connects to New Trier’s Student Personal Growth, Engagement, and Well-being framework of the strategic plan. This year’s strategic focus is the overall theme of supporting the transition back to school which includes MTSS. Ms. Barbe shared further historical details including the work of the MTSS Steering Committee and the transition from individual, student based RTI to the more global approach of MTSS with a focus on individual growth and development for everybody. She displayed the definition of MTSS and noted that, nationally, 80-90% of students in a school will be appropriately and effectively educated with high quality instruction – both academically and social emotionally. The programs in Tiers Two and Three support the remaining students.

Ms. Fassnacht shared a visual that highlighted the breadth of services under MTSS which include academic and behavioral supports, reflecting the need for students to have fluid access to instruction and supports of varying intensity. Then Ms. Fassnacht introduced a video that highlighted some of the Tier One practices used by faculty to support students.

Ms. Barbe walked through the academic and social emotional/mental health supports for Tiers One, Two and Three. Tier Two is typically smaller group instruction with Tier Three being more individualized. Ms. Barbe noted that Tier Three support is not like having an Individualized Education Program (IEP). A student with an IEP is receiving supports and services outside the tiered triangle. Their supports are tailored to their disability needs with specialized instruction for those needs. In addition to their IEP, they are also in these tiered supports receiving high quality instruction.

Ms. Zajac acknowledged those in the building who are supporting students through MTSS and at Tier One, it is everyone in the building from classroom teachers to Physical Plant Services staff. There are six MTSS coaches, one coordinator as well as a Northfield student support coordinator. There are also a wide variety of staff who support Tier Two and Three interventions. Next, Ms. Zajac shared how this work will be sustained as well as next steps. One of the first steps is to develop and refine the District’s data review process in order to intervene earlier than is currently happening. This will also lead to identifying additional social emotional interventions as well as math interventions. Continued professional development will be needed for teachers to keep them informed so they can support students as they move along the tiers.

Dr. Panopoulos shared that the video that was used with staff at the recent early release and late start days. She shared about the work that staff did on both days related to MTSS. Dr. Sally added that the pandemic got in the way of this initiative as well and it is exciting to see it relaunch. Supporting students social emotionally and academically during the last year was difficult. This structure will be beneficial to the institution as a whole. He went on to share final thoughts and then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen noted it was an excellent report and inquired whether the percentages for Tiers Two and Three is New Trier data or national. Dr. Panopoulos responded that it is national data, noting what Ms. Zajac shared earlier, that if the District can get into its data, it would provide more accurate percentages. In looking at preliminary information and data, New Trier is around 90% for Tier One. Mr. Dronen then inquired if there was data for Tiers Two and Three related to Covid. Ms. Barbe shared that while they do not have specific numbers to share, from her experience, there has been a tremendous increase in referrals to MTSS and other support systems at New Trier. She shared this is in comparison to the first two months of a typical school year. Dr. Sally noted it was important to acknowledge that it is busier at every tier. Mr. Dronen referenced that for Tier Three, the school provides individual social work support and inquired if the District has significant resources such as social workers to handle any increased social emotional issues this year. Dr. Sally responded that the Tier Two intervention allows the school to support students in smaller groups, he went on note that the structure is being built out that will help some of that. Dr. Panopoulos noted that a social worker was added this year in preparation. She also noted our shift from individualized social work support to offering more group settings, even at Tier One. Information is being collected on the student support center, which is a new drop-in option, which will be evaluated as the year continues.

Ms. Hahn thanked the group for their presentation. She noted that she had a similar question to Mr. Dronen about being properly staffed. Ms. Hahn then asked for further understanding in regard to how students move through the tiers, noting that as more data is collected, there may be more of a systemic approach, but currently it seems more individualized. Ms. Fassnacht replied that if a student is identified by an adviser or teacher, they are referred to the MTSS problem solving team which is comprised of coaches, psychologist, social worker, adviser, and adviser chair. Then qualitative as well as quantitative data is gathered from their current classes and the team discusses appropriate interventions and supports. The student's progress is monitored and about ten weeks later the team meets to see how effective the intervention may be, and it is at that point when shifting to other tiers may occur.

Ms. Hahn noted that at the Covid Reentry and Community Wellness Team (CRCWT) meeting, there was much discussion about student and staff well-being. Dr. Panopoulos shared comments, noting that the school is looking at systemic ways to look at this, and what students can respond to in a general education environment that could benefit them. Dr. Panopoulos went on to speak about Tier Two as well.

Ms. Hahn then inquired if this is being communicated out to parents as well as if there is a mechanism for parents to communicate their feedback. Dr. Panopoulos replied that parents are a part of the process with Ms. Fassnacht adding that a critical component is the relationship with the adviser and many of the conversations take place between them and the family.

Ms. Alcantara thanked the group for their presentation. Her takeaway was that despite challenges during at-home learning, there were insights that were drawn from and issues that may not have been top of mind in pre-Covid times that have been brought to the forefront. She noted that as students Zoomed in from home, it was hard to ignore the impact that outside the class has on in class performance and shined a light on students as a whole. Although some of this felt reactive to that situation, Ms. Alcantara hopes that that perspective continues as it appears there were some learnings there as well. Ms. Barbe commented that many of the programs on the chart existed pre-Covid. The video showed how the pandemic and hybrid learning helped to focus on what lives are like outside of school and what a person brings with them when they come to work.

Mr. Das inquired if MTSS is in the consciousness of the student, where they may think they need to go to a different tier. He also inquired how are they or their family are locating themselves within MTSS. Ms. Fassnacht shared that this particular language is not being used and students are not labeled. Conversations are had with students to see how they feel they are doing and the supports that would best help them. Conversations are also had with parents about this. Ms. Fassnacht also noted that often students are advocating for additional support or parents have brought concerns to their child's adviser or teacher. Course names and the strategic interventions are used instead of saying to a student that they are moving to a Tier Two support.

Mr. Das asked Dr. Panopoulos to expand on how other experiences such as the monthly observances feed into the tiered system. She shared that the monthly observances with the Toolkit and curricular supports are Tier One as it is high quality instruction that occurs during various months with various groups of people who are recognized. After further comments, she noted that all students should fit some place.

Ms. Albrecht inquired about those students who are self-selecting support such as the social work drop-in or the Reading Writing Center or even an outside tutor and how those supports are tracked. Ms. Zajac replied that the school would not have access to the outside supports, but students do scan their IDs when visiting the Academic Assistance Center, for example. Ms. Albrecht inquired if the block schedule is affecting this. Dr. Panopoulos responded that it is a little early to tell but that data is being collected.

Dr. Sally commented that the large list of interventions is helpful to know, but the real power is the organizational structure which the tiers assist with as well as the overall dispositional change of "everyone, everywhere." He noted that high-quality instruction in the classroom is the foundation of supporting every student. This change has been significant, and a good start with sustainability playing an important part.

#### **E. Summer School Report – Postponed to November**

#### **F. 2021-2022 School Year Update**

Dr. Sally presented an update on the 2021-2022 school year. Covid numbers continue to stay low in the school and community. They are monitored daily with health services staff doing an exceptional job managing this with families. The Covid Response and Community Wellness Team (CRCWT) continues to meet, though it is less often



as there is less of a need to process issues. CRCWT will continue to stay informed and meet, so if numbers change, the District is able to respond.

Regarding the block schedule, teachers have recently given student surveys in order to gather feedback. Departments and teachers will discuss themes on the October 22<sup>nd</sup> early dismissal day. Surveys and focus groups with teachers, students, and parents are scheduled for early December.

Another piece continues to be the transition back with a sustained focus on supports and the mental health of students and staff. The adaptation from last year has taken its toll on students and staff. Dr. Sally is in the process of conducting listening sessions with teachers and staff and from these conversations, discussions will occur if there are systemic pieces that can provide relief for students and staff. One item heard from students and staff is the difficulty in being able to meet outside of class, which Dr. Sally shared further details on. Dr. Sally then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Tomlinson noted that previously block schedule feedback was slated for November, she inquired if it will likely be January as feedback will be gathered in December. Mr. Tragos replied that there will be some feedback available in November with additional feedback coming in December. Dr. Sally also noted that the more formal feedback from students, parents, teachers, and staff will be significant at the December Board meeting.

Ms. Hahn shared from the CRCWT that the Covid numbers and large ten-day quarantines that were envisioned are rare. She noted that health services and teachers are reporting multiple, discreet absences from minor illnesses and the time it takes to clear students to get back with a negative PCR test. She applauded the addition of an administrative assistant in health services, who begins work at 6:30 a.m. to process results so students can return to school and keep absences to a minimum. Ms. Hahn also referenced the earlier MTSS presentation and supporting students when they are out for a small period of time. She then went on to share an anecdote.

#### **G. 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. It is a busy time as the District works to prepare bids with construction starting in January. The second of three bid packages has been released with early indications that there is good interest. Bids for this portion of the work are due October 28<sup>th</sup> and will be reviewed internally and then presented to the Board at the November meeting for approval. The District continues to use all levers available to manage the cost of the project during this period of unusual high inflation and material shortages. The District also continues to evaluate options to address any unexpected bid results such as the use of alternates as well as reviewing the funds that are available in case they are needed. Also, at the November meeting, the District will provide a presentation on how it will continue to meet the needs of students and staff in Kinetic Wellness (KW) and Athletics during construction as well as the overall plan for safety and logistics. There will also be a summary of the events the District will hold to commemorate the Gates Gym in advance of the groundbreaking. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen inquired about steel futures. Mr. Johnson replied that while they have stabilized, when looking at material prices, including steel, and that the cost estimate that was done in February compared to now, costs are significantly higher. The District is doing what it can to manage this and there is good interest from steel companies who are encouraged to participate in the bid process.

#### **H. Class Size Report**

Mr. Tragos presented the class size report and began by thanking Mr. Mike Lee, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services, and Ms. Katherine Kapustiak, Scheduler and Application Support Specialist for their work on this report. He noted this report has been produced for many years and gives the Board and community a perspective on class size and allocation of the District's resources. Planning began last winter for staffing and sectioning for the current school year, and was based on a few targets: to maintain, if not, lower class size average, meet budget targets with strategic allocations in special education and MTSS as well as in student services to meet academic and social emotional needs as students came back from the pandemic.

Mr. Tragos went on to share a few highlights from the report. He began with section one; department counts and percentages. Class enrollments per department are relatively consistent with the number of students in the District, so as enrollment has decreased, the percentages have stayed in relative alignment with the percentages overall. He went on to share further details. The average number of classes per student this year is at 6.51 compared to last year's 6.53. He noted there were concerns when the school moved to the block schedule that students might not be able to

take all the classes they wanted to, however, these numbers clearly show that students are taking the courses they want.

Sections two and three, showed the distributions by department and classes outside of the range (those on the smaller side with 14 or fewer students as well as those on the larger side with 30 or more students). In section two, the average class size decreased to 22.1 from 22.4 which was the average class size the past two years. The District is within its range, but with a slightly smaller class size overall. He also pointed out the work to bring more classes within the District's target ranges, more classes above 14 students and below 30. Those large class sizes, 30 or more students, have decreased for the second consecutive year to 0.3%, the lowest in five years. For the smaller classes, those with 14 or fewer students, decreased to 4.9% from 6.5%. It is a collaborative effort with department chairs to achieve these targets, however, the goal is not to have all classes within the range. The District recognizes that it will have classes below 14 students for many good reasons such as a specialized program or need. Mr. Tragos then provided detail around section three, sections outside target range, and additional columns that were included for perspective on singletons and doubletons.

The data continues to be used to collaborate with the administrative team as well as association and department leaders. It supports planning for next year while also allowing for reflection on the current staffing and sectioning process and the decisions that were made. Mr. Tragos then invite questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. McLane noted that overall enrollment is down about 150 students which equals eight fewer classrooms, he inquired if that was anticipated as well as what might be going on with the sender schools and if there will be an influx of students coming. Mr. Tragos responded that while planning in February and March, the District was planning to be down 96 students (total District enrollment last year was 4,032 with planning for 3,936) and had staffed appropriately for it. What was not expected was the additional 48 students that the District is down for a total enrollment of 3,888. Mr. Tragos encouraged a second look by Mr. Johnson and the demographer, McKibbon as well as working with sender schools. Mr. Johnson added that the District will receive the results of its demographic study in a couple of months. He went on to add the District keeps a list of where every student has gone, and anecdotally noted there was not a big trend. Students are spreading out across the country in a mix of public and private schools. Very few are going to private schools in the area, with a few others going to other public schools nearby. Many have scattered across the country, though it seems like an atypical number of those types of moves, leaving Mr. Johnson to surmise that some of it is related to the pandemic. He noted that sender schools are reporting similar trends as well. Mr. Johnson noted that summary information will be prepared. Mr. Johnson also confirmed for Dr. Sally that the results from the demographer will be available in December.

Ms. Alcantara inquired that with the demographics report, the Board will receive information on birth rate, move-in rate to the area, amongst others, which Mr. Johnson confirmed. Ms. Alcantara noted that regarding birth rate, there has been a prediction of decreasing enrollment for well over a decade, but this is a more abrupt drop. Mr. Johnson noted that the demographer will be asked to analyze that at a deeper level. He also noted that summary information about where students have gone will be provided.

Ms. Tomlinson inquired if the District is required to offer Drivers' Ed as only 28 students out of 1,000 are in the class. Mr. Tragos responded that the District is required to offer it. Ms. Tomlinson then inquired if it would be more cost-effective to offer a stipend. Mr. Johnson replied that the District will look into it and it already has a waiver which allows it to charge more for the class. He went on to share that anecdotally many of the students who take it are receiving a fee waiver, so it is a way to access the program for those who may not have the funds to do so elsewhere.

Ms. Albrecht summarized that the report looked good with much fewer class sizes of 30 and over, while those under 14 seemed to be a controlled amount. She noted that many of the 14 and under classes are level two where more support is needed.

## **I. New Course Proposals**

Mr. Tragos provided a report on the new course proposals, but first began by thanking his administrative assistant, Ms. Lisa Brown, and Dr. Tillery for their work. There are eight new courses and revisions to 21 existing courses with some type of modification. While all proposals were refined, there was one that was not recommended for approval through the vetting process. Out of the pandemic came a swell of creativity and Mr. Tragos praised department leaders and teachers for their work on these. He went on to share the eight new course proposals as well as details on each from the following departments: Applied Arts, Applied Arts/Special Education, Art, Mathematics, Music and

Theatre, and Science. Mr. Tragos recognized Ms. Elizabeth Bennett, the new Music and Theatre Department Chair, for her collaborative work with teachers in the department to bring forward two new courses to meet student needs, build on the inclusivity of the department for all student and create new opportunities. Mr. Tragos then briefly went through the many name changes from the Art, Mathematics, Music and Theatre and Science departments. Finally, he shared details about changes to course prerequisites, duration, or level in classes from the Applied Arts, Business Education and Kinetic Wellness/Dance departments. He then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Alcantara noted that Men's Chorus changed to Trevian Glee Club and inquired if there is still a group called Choraliers. Mr. Tragos replied that Choraliers still exists and will continue with Glee Club being a new addition.

Ms. Tomlinson praised the semester options allowing students to take risks or explore new areas. She noted that Mr. Tragos said they will not require more staff support and inquired if that was true of all of them. Mr. Tragos replied that it was only true of those he mentioned, noting that some of them, particularly in the elective areas, are stacked courses or ones that are taught simultaneously or combined. Discussion briefly continued between the two.

Ms. Hahn noted that this is one of her favorite presentations of the year and it is important for the Board to see the amount of effort and collaboration that goes into New Trier's course work. She reiterated that this is not out-of-the-box curriculum and that teachers and administrators at every level work to put together an amazing experience while continually expanding opportunities for students. She noted it is also heartening to see the strategic plan as it is implemented in the classroom such as with the expanding music opportunities. Ms. Hahn noted her interest in the STEC (Skilled Trades and Emerging Careers) class and the strategic goal of introducing students to alternatives for post-high school. She noted that this class is offered in the special education department and inquired if these opportunities may be presented to the general education population as they too may want to be exposed to non-college trajectories. Mr. Tragos noted it is offered through the Applied Arts department and is primarily their course. It is co-taught with a special education teacher and there are students in that class without IEPs as well. Mr. Tragos confirmed that it is open to everybody.

Ms. Albrecht shared that these were thoughtful additions and changes.

Mr. Tragos noted that these will be brought back in November for the Board's approval.

## **VII. Administrative Items**

### **A. Treasurer's Report for September 2021**

Mr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for September 2021. The weighted portfolio yield continues to average 14 basis points for short term and 93 for long term. Fund balances for all accounts is \$159,590,081. The District is starting to see significant property tax receipts as initial payments are made, although it is still behind last year. Payments were due October 1<sup>st</sup>, and the treasurer takes additional time to process and disburse them to the District. Mr. Johnson expects them to correct over the course of the next month. The District is also seeing the start of regular state and federal payments.

### **B. Financial Reports for September 2021**

Mr. Johnson presented the Financial Reports for September 2021. Operating revenue was \$26,873,852 for the first three months of the fiscal year, or about 39% lower than last year with the largest deviation being property taxes. The District has received nearly \$26 million in property taxes. The variance will continue to decrease each month and significant property tax distributions have been seen in October, which will be reflected in next month's report. Other local sources such as fees and transportation revenue reflect the return to normal operations. The adopted budget shows that the District will have a revenue increase of 5.34%.

Operating expenditures were \$25,442,470 through September, or 8.3% higher than last year. There is more variation in the beginning months of the year, especially when comparing this year with last year due to Covid. Expenses will be monitored carefully for the impact of any inflationary cost on goods and services purchased on behalf of students. The fund book balances for all accounts were \$155,461,647. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Albrecht noted that when looking at property tax receipts, the District should be caught up in October. Mr. Johnson noted it will be close but may take through November.

**\*C. Resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$10,500,000 General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds of Township High School District Number 203, Cook County, Illinois, for the purpose of increasing the Working Cash Fund of said School District, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof.**

Last February, the Board approved a funding plan for the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project. This plan funds the project without the use of a referendum, using resources generously provided to the District by taxpayers in the normal course of operations. The plan includes three bond issuances, the \$55 million issuance that was completed last year, and the issuance discussed this evening from the District's debt service extension base (DSEB). The DSEB is a capped portion of the levy, which is used to pay debt service. This issuance will be sold in a public sale later this fall. After approval, the next step of the process is to obtain a rating from Moody's Credit Agency. The District has historically been rated Aaa, the highest rating available. Based on New Trier's strong tax base and financial management, the expectation is to have a similar, favorable rating from Moody's after the District meets with them next month. Next fiscal year, the final bonds will be sold for the project. Mr. Johnson invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Albrecht inquired if there was a reason that the \$10 million DSEB was moved from February to December. Mr. Johnson replied that February was the deadline in order to be in the levy for next year. When looking at the market trends now in this shorter window, the District's financial advisor, Ms. Liz Hennessey, feels that December is the right time to go to market to receive the best possible price.

Ms. Alcantara moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approves the Resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$10,500,000 General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds of Township High School District Number 203, Cook County, Illinois, for the purpose of increasing the Working Cash Fund of said School District, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof.

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.

**\*D. 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, for the purpose of refunding certain outstanding bonds of said School District, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax sufficient to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the proposed sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof.**

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 and community members. The bonds used to fund the project are callable next year, and it is possible to refund and reissue them at a lower interest rate, providing a savings to taxpayers. The District has been closely monitoring this with the Finance Committee and in consultation with its financial advisor, Ms. Hennessey from Raymond James. Mr. Johnson recommended that the Board approve the attached motion to authorize the refunding and allow the District to prepare for it. This will allow the District to go to market when it feels the rates are most favorable on the behalf of the school and taxpayers.

Mr. McLane inquired if the District has a sure thing now with the \$3.5 million versus inflation and a higher cost that needs to be funded for the East Side Project, and if the flexibility allows the District to truly take advantage of the market or not. Mr. Johnson replied that it is the recommendation of Ms. Hennessey, who has been the District's financial advisor for many years and also has many years in the market, that the likely best time to sell them is next year. Mr. Johnson noted there are two potential savings, almost \$6 million or \$3.5 million, with a differential of about 60 basis points. Looking toward next fall, the chance of that window closing, Ms. Hennessey believes is very small and that the maximum possible savings can be achieved if the District waits for a later sale. Mr. Johnson noted that it is an interesting market right now and it is the District's perspective that it needs to be prepared to move quickly if the market begins to do so as well. Ms. Albrecht asked Mr. Johnson to go through taxable versus nontaxable. He noted that the bonds are currently nontaxable, and if the District did an advance refunding at this point, the bonds become taxable, which accounts for the delta between the two amounts. If issued now, they would be taxable and stay that way for the remainder of their life. He shared further details, focusing on a potential future

legislative change. Ms. Hahn then clarified the tax piece, noting that the current law is that if the District waits until September of 2022, the bonds are not taxable. The potential change is that they would become nontaxable sooner. Passing the resolution allows the District to move quickly should it need to. Mr. Johnson confirmed, noting it allows the District to move forward for six months, and as discussed at the Finance Committee, puts the District in the ready position if the market moves. There are several steps the District must take to go to market.

Dr. Sally added that, in discussion, with the Finance Committee, as far as Ms. Hennessey's work with New Trier as well as other districts, cases are reviewed, and a judgement made. This is not something that is new or different and is done on a regular basis in other districts. Mr. Johnson shared that the consensus for other districts in a similar position is to wait. Mr. McLane and Mr. Johnson then discussed interest on the bonds.

Dr. Sally outlined the process, noting that the Finance Committee will revisit this, with Mr. Johnson sharing that it will be monitored on a continuous basis between now and next fall. Mr. Dronen noted that it puts the District in a position, that if it decides to go sooner, it can be done with this resolution.

Ms. Alcantara inquired, assuming the resolution is approved, how quick the District can be if it sees the market changing. Mr. Johnson replied that these bonds will be rated at the same time as the others. He estimated about two weeks to prepare the official statement and go to sale. Mr. McLane inquired if taxable or nontaxable would affect the rating at all. Mr. Johnson responded that it does not affect rating, only the interest rate calculation. Ms. Albrecht also noted that it affects the differential doing taxable now versus potentially nontaxable later or having the taxable aspect withdrawn if there is new legislation.

Mr. Dronen inquired that if the District were to do taxable, it cannot be refunded again, which Mr. Johnson confirmed that once it shifts to taxable, it becomes taxable for the duration of the bond. They are still 20-year bonds, that will mature in 2034. Even if the District were to refinance again at some point, the remaining years on the bonds, would have to be a taxable refinancing if the shift to taxable was decided on.

Ms. Albrecht noted that this is the recommendation of the District's public finance advisor and her team, which Mr. Johnson confirmed.

Mr. Dronen moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approves 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, for the purpose of refunding certain outstanding bonds of said School District, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax sufficient to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the proposed sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: Mr. McLane

The motion passed.

### **VIII. Consent Agenda**

- Bill List for the Period, September 1 – 30, 2021
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Change of Status, Resignations, and Stipends – Appointment)

Ms. Albrecht inquired if any members wanted to pull an item off the Consent Agenda, no one chose to do so. Ms. Hahn moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: Bill List for the Period, September 1 – 30, 2021 and the Personnel Report (Appointments, Change of Status, Resignations, and Stipends – Appointment). Mr. Das seconded the motion. 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.

## **IX. Board Member Reports**

Mr. Das shared information from the **Booster Club** meeting, noting a key theme was support for any activity that a student is involved in and having spirit wear available for them. The Booster Club has partnered with a local company, Human Kind, who creates customizable spirit wear. There is also a focus on including more people in their membership as well.

Ms. Hahn shared that the **New Trier Educational Foundation's (NTEF)** met on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and reported that the proceeds from the Strokes of Genius Golf Outing raised \$32,926. The Foundation is also busy with the Innovation Hub and the fundraising aspect of that project, which is in partnership with the school. Grant meetings began in October with the Foundation was holding informational sessions for teachers. Grants are due in November.

Mr. Dronen shared that the **Finance Committee** met on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Discussion centered on the refunding bonds as well as the DSEB bonds. Also discussed was the 15-year capital planning. There will also be more DSEB capacity in future years based on CPI. The committee also discussed the property tax refunding law which is effective for the 2021 levy. Each year, the District pays \$2-4 million for refunds in tax appeals and errors in the property tax process. The new law will allow districts to recover funds.

Mr. Dronen also shared that **True North Educational Cooperative** met on October 13<sup>th</sup>, formally NSSSED. The Coop lost several teachers on short notice to a member school district this year, that was not New Trier. There is the potential for impact on services and True North is exploring ways to contractually bind teachers for a longer period of time to prevent this in the future. They also looking to lease a Transition space in Highland Park for their program for students aged 18 – 22.

Mr. McLane noted that the **Facilities Steering Committee** met and the only item not discussed this evening was the stormwater/Duke Childs project. It is proceeding with many moving parts and many different governing bodies involved.

Ms. Alcantara attended the **New Trier Parents' Association (NTPA)** meeting October 7<sup>th</sup>. Key points from the Board meetings were reviewed. NTPA wants to show appreciation for various groups at New Trier and are going to organize volunteers for this purpose. Also discussed was the Membership Toolkit directory, with some people noting issues with the platform shift from A to Z. An FAQ will be sent out regarding this shift. Chairs will be scheduling coffees in an upcoming two-week window. The next NTPA executive committee meeting is November 4<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Tomlinson noted that the **Environmental Committee** met via Zoom on September 28<sup>th</sup>. The new website has a sustainability page that details new initiatives and programs across both campuses. The Bickert gyms are going to 100% LED lights in the next two years, with a payback of two to four years. The East Side Project is aiming for LEED Gold certification, which is still being worked on. Ms. Tomlinson also shared that 93% of material waste is being recycled. Two car charging stations will also be installed. The kitchens at both campuses help compost 15-30 gallons of food waste daily.

Ms. Tomlinson shared information from the **New Trier Fine Arts Association (NTFAA)** meeting held October 13<sup>th</sup>. She noted there is an Environmental t-shirt exhibit by IGSS students in the Brierly Art Gallery. One student focused on how the fashion industry has a larger carbon footprint than international flights and marine shipping combined. She encouraged Board members to visit the Brierly. NTFAA awarded \$10,500 in grants this semester with 70% of them going towards visiting artists that will help advance New Trier's culture, climate, and equity goals. This was highlighted earlier in the meeting with the dance program. The next grant deadline is January 26<sup>th</sup>.

Performing arts events include the 50-person Pep Band playing at the football game on Friday, tuning into New Trier Radio on 88.1 to listen one of fifteen new weekly programs being broadcast, attending the fall play, *Silent Sky*, or ordering from this month's restaurant on Thursday, November 4<sup>th</sup> to support the Fine Arts First Thursday fundraiser.

Ms. Alcantara also shared that there was a **Community Engagement Committee** meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup> led by Director of Communications, Ms. Niki Dizon. Key topics of discussion included the new website launch, details regarding plans for reaching out to younger families and alumni as well as events planned for the East Side project including commemorating Gates Gym and celebrating the groundbreaking for the project.

Mr. Dronen noted the excellent redesign of the website.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following:

- There are four weeks between now and the next Board meeting.
- First Quarter ends and grades will be sent out.
- Parent-Teacher conferences will occur via Zoom.
- The Fall Festival of Winds and the Fall Township Orchestra concerts will take place.
- Many athletic state series will take place as well.

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

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathleen Albrecht, President