

BOARD NOTES
September 28, 2020

The regular meeting of the School Board was held Monday, September 28, 2020, at NPHS Auditorium with Mr. Phil King, Mr. Al Williamson, Mr. Dale Groves, Mr. Rich Shail and Mr. Jason DeMeyer present. Dr. Paul White, Superintendent, was also present.

Mr. Phil King, Board President, reviewed guidelines for speaking on agenda items.

There was a motion by Mr. Groves to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mr. Williamson and approved 5-0.

CONSENT ITEMS

The Board approved the Consent Items as follows:

- (A) Minutes – August 24, 2020 & September 14, 2020
- (B) Financial Reports
- (C) Claims
- (D) Payroll
- (E) Personnel Report as follows:

CERTIFIED

- **Leaves/Resignations/Retirements**
 - 1. Daniel Reffo – ECA Resignation as 5th Grade Girls Basketball Coach at Prairie View Elementary effective 9/21/2020
- **Employment**
- **Employment – Afterschool**
 - 1. Lisa Smiertelny – Afterschool Program Instructor at Rolling Prairie Elementary School for school year 2020-2021
 - 2. Catherine Saylor - Afterschool Program Site Coordinator at Olive Twp. Elementary School for school year 2020-2021
 - 3. Timothy Flanagan - Afterschool Program Instructor at Prairie View Elementary School for school year 2020-2021
 - 4. Melanie Cloonan - Afterschool Program Instructor at Rolling Prairie Elementary School for school year 2020-2021
 - 5. Kara Mamazza - Afterschool Program Instructor at Rolling Prairie Elementary School for school year 2020-2021
- **Employment – Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular**
 - 1. Jon Schroeder – Olive Twp. Elementary 5th Grade Volleyball Coach beginning 2020-2021 school year
 - 2. Barb Papai – Olive Twp. Elementary RTI Team Member beginning 2020-2021 school year
 - 3. Kara Mamazza – Rolling Prairie Elementary 5th Grade Volleyball Coach for the 2020-2021 school year
 - 4. Jeanne Romstadt – NPHS PL221 Leadership Team Member for the 2020-2021 school year
 - 5. Joshua Bolakowski – NPHS Varsity Assistant Football Coach beginning 2020-2021 school year
 - 6. Lauren Van Goey – NPHS Audio/Visual Club Sponsor beginning 2020-2021 school year
 - 7. Heidi Schellinger - NPHS RTI Chair beginning 2020-2021 school year

8. Kate VanPelt – NPMS RTI Co-Team Chair beginning 2020-2021 school year
 9. Dena True - NPMS RTI Co-Team Chair beginning 2020-2021 school year
 10. Lydia Carroll - NPMS RTI Co-Team Chair beginning 2020-2021 school year
 11. Jennifer Smith - NPMS RTI Co-Team Chair beginning 2020-2021 school year
- **Adjustments**
 1. Julie Beakas – FMLA Leave date adjustment is 12/3/2020 through 2/26/2021.

NON-CERTIFIED

- **Leaves/Resignations/Retirements**
 1. Joyce DeLaurentis – Retirement as Olive Twp. Elementary Secretary/Treasurer effective 9/30/2020
 2. Judy Duensing – Retirement as Bus Driver for NPUSC effective 10/31/2020
 3. Colin Layman – Resignation as NPUSC Bus Driver effective 8/26/2020
 4. Mike Hale – Termination as NPUSC Nutritional Services Director effective 9/8/2020
 5. Pam Bumgardner – Resignation as Olive Twp. Elementary Instructional Assistant effective 9/21/2020
 6. Brian Williamson – FMLA Leave as NPUSC Grounds Maintenance Worker beginning 9/28/2020 through 12/18/2020
 7. Nancy Pilarski – FMLA Leave as ELL Instructional Assistant at Rolling Prairie Elementary School beginning 9/18/2020 through 10/30/2020
 8. Angela Deutscher – Intermittent FMLA Leave as Library Aide at Olive Twp. Elementary School beginning 8/13/2020 through 5/28/2021
 9. Jessica Lichtenbarger – Superintendent approved Medical Leave as Nutritional Services Worker at Rolling Prairie Elementary School beginning 9/9/2020 through 10/30/2020
 10. Sharin McGuire – FMLA Leave as NPUSC Bus Driver beginning 9/5/2020 through 11/27/2020
- **Employment**
 1. Morgan Livinghouse – Rolling Prairie Elementary Instructional Assistant beginning 9/1/2020
 2. Chloe Bronner – Olive Twp. Elementary Instructional Assistant beginning date pending receipt of criminal background check results
 3. Thomas Wicnik – New Prairie High School Custodian beginning 8/21/2020
 4. Laurie Friis – Olive Twp. Elementary Secretary/Treasurer pending criminal background check results
- **Employment – Extra-Curricular**
 1. Jason Clemons – NPMS 7th Grade Head Boys Basketball Coach for the 2020-2021 school year
 2. Jason Clemons – NPMS 7th Grade Head Girls Basketball Coach for the 2020-2021 school year
 3. Austin Kubit – NPMS 8th Grade Head Boys Basketball Coach for the 2020-21 school year
 4. Tony Chelminiak – Olive Twp. Elementary 5th Grade Boys Basketball Coach for the 2020-2021 school year

5. Eric Schuck – RPES 5th Grade Boys Basketball Coach for the 2020-2021 school year
- **Employment – Afterschool**
 1. Tia Kolasa – Afterschool Program Instructor at Rolling Prairie Elementary school for school year 2020-2021
 2. Rhonda Kujawa - Afterschool Program Site Coordinator at Rolling Prairie Elementary School for school year 2020-2021
 3. Morgan Livinghouse – Afterschool Program Instructional Assistant at Rolling Prairie Elementary School for school year 2020-2021
 4. Kristine Gadacz - Afterschool Program Site Coordinator at Prairie View Elementary School for school year 2020-2021
 5. Jackson Buhring – Afterschool Program Instructor at Olive Twp., Prairie View and Rolling Prairie Elementary Schools pending criminal background check results for school year 2020-2021
 - **Adjustments**
 1. Lisa Whalen – Position change from Food Service Aide to Food Service Worker at Olive Twp. Elementary School beginning 8/13/2020.
 2. Elva Sue Sanders – Position change from Food Service Aide to Food Service Worker at Prairie View Elementary School beginning 8/13/2020

REPORTS

- Dr. White thanked teachers, parents, students and the community for their efforts in the 50% attendance plan to this point. Everyone concerned has had to make sacrifices in order to make this plan the best situation for our students.
- Dr. White shared parent survey results from last week. At the elementary level parents voted 66% to return students back to full attendance. At the middle school level parents voted 58% to return to full attendance and the high school level parents voted 55% to return to full attendance.

ACTION ITEMS

- (A) The Board accepted Donations:
 - Rolling Prairie Elementary, Prairie View Elementary and Olive Twp. Elementary Schools each received a donation of 8 backpacks full of school supplies, a large box of miscellaneous school supplies and cases of water from New Carlisle United Methodist Church
 - Howmet Aerospace Foundation donated \$20,000 to be split between HOSA'S Stop the Bleed program and the Robotics Program
 - NPUSC received a donation of \$500 from GMB Architecture & Engineering Advised Fund of the Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland, MI Area
 - Prairie View Elementary received a donation of water bottles, lanyards and notebooks valued at \$300 from Marian University at Ancilla College
- (B) The Board approved and adopted the 2021 Budget and Resolution for Appropriations and Tax Rates
- (C) The Board adopted the 2021 Capital Assets Fund Plan and resolution
- (D) The Board adopted the 2021-2025 Bus Replacement Plan and Resolution

- (E) The Board approved the NPUSC Teacher Evaluation Instrument
- (F) The Board approved the NPUSC Counselor Evaluation Instrument
- (G) The Board approved the MOU with Ivy Tech Community College Dual Credit Classes
- (H) The Board approved the Updated Board Policy 3220.01
- (I) The Board approved the Emergency Expenditure for Bus Engine Replacement
- (J) The Board approved the Emergency Expenditure for Safety Repairs to NPHS Gymnasiums
- (K) The Board approved the CMC Award for NPHS Half-Time Building to Larson-Danielson Construction Company Inc.

➤ Public comments were taken before Board approval of Action Item (L).

- Dr. White explained that he must balance educational needs of students and health/safety considerations. Last July, the issue at the forefront was the health and safety of students because of COVID 19 which in his mind outweighed the interest in full in-person education, which led to the 50% attendance hybrid. In reviewing the recent State Health Department data for the counties on a 7-day case rate average, Laporte County is at 3.1% and St. Joe County is at 4.6%. The State Health Department has stated this data does justify a return to 100% attendance, but Dr. White noted at 100% attendance we cannot social distance in the classroom. Dr. White stated that we will do our best to accommodate distancing in lunch rooms. We will monitor closely the COVID situation and make changes in the attendance plan as necessary.
- Mr. Pietrzak congratulated the administration on the success of the 50% attendance plan so far this year. He urged caution at 100% attendance. Flu season is coming with everyone spending more time indoors with holiday party's coming up. These are all potential spreading events. Doubling the number of students will not just double the risk of spread but will result in an exponential higher risk of pandemic spread. We all want normal but it will be wiser to stay at 50%.
- Ms. Dingman asked if the decision stays at 50% can there can be more support for parents and caregivers for students at home.
- Mrs. Mrozinski stated that she and her husband are hopeful that the Board will make the decision for students to go back to full in-person learning. She truly appreciates the efforts the teachers have made to make this work. She is curious as to why our school corporation is the only one in the area at 50% attendance yet sports are ok. Their children have become very stressed and her student with an IEP is in a downward trend with grades. She is a nurse who works in the COVID unit once a week so she does understand the risks with COVID. Her students want to go back to school full time.
- Mr. Groves stated that it is extremely difficult to know what to do. Back in July he stated that he will use data to drive his decisions on what might be best for everyone and keep fear out of decision making. The data would suggest that getting back at 100% is an appropriate thing to do. If there is a situation of COVID flare ups

we can pull back to 50%. His recommendation is to go back to 100% monitoring the situation daily, acting when necessary. He also stated that he has noted that the people of this community who have approached him have been courteous, civil and respectful. He appreciates that approach and is grateful.

- Mr. Williamson concurred with Mr. Groves. He is, however, surprised to hear about the emotional stress kids are experiencing. We need to get the students back in the classroom to evaluate and monitor them. He explained that his vote is to go back to school at 100% and monitor the situation closely giving Dr. White the authority, that if anything changes, he is able to go back to the hybrid model or eLearning as deemed necessary.
- Dr. White stated that the public comments are a good representation of how challenging the situation is. Balancing health and safety as well as emotional stress issues on students are valid concerns. Dr. White went on to inform everyone that it is a fact that we will have to give up 6 ft of social distancing at 100% attendance in the classroom. Data shows that there has not been a covid case in the corporation in 3 weeks. It is possible that in the return to full attendance it could change. We will have to monitor the situation closely and make a change if it is necessary, but at this point the need for daily student attendance is outweighing the local COVID concern, which has improved. Dr. White recommends moving us back to 100% attendance with the elementary students returning on October 12, 2020 at 100% then grades 6-12 students returning October 19, 2020 at 100%.

(L) The Board approved the NPUSC Attendance Plan Beyond October 9, 2020

BOARD COMMENTS

- Mr. King stated that NPUSC is proud to announce that Mr. Rich Shail has been awarded the Indiana School Board Association (ISBA) Outstanding Boardmanship Award. The ISBA Outstanding Boardmanship Award is presented to an individual who has performed over and beyond their call of duty; provided support for their fellow Board Members; exhibited enduring service on behalf of public education; and made significant contributions to their schools and community. The ISBA represents all 291 school corporation Board members in Indiana. Mr. Shail was one of over 150 members nominated for this award. Mr. Shail was unanimously chosen for this award.
Congratulations Mr. Shail!
- Mr. Shail thanked the Board so much. He stated he is humbled by receiving this award. He wants to make clear that he did not do this on his own. He had many wonderful people who stood beside him and worked with him collaboratively to help make NPUSC what it is today. He stated that we are one of the greatest school corporations in the State of Indiana as well as one of the best kept secrets in northern Indiana. Mr. Shail stated he loves our school corporation; the people he works with; and the great friendships he has made. Mr. Shail went on to say that he is honored, thankful, and blessed to have been a part of NPUSC for the past 20 years as a Board member.
- Mr. Groves commented that he joined the Board 12 years ago with Mr. Shail as his mentor. Mr. Shail is an individual he leaned on several times with questions

as a new Board member. He stated that they didn't always see eye to eye but most of the time they did. They both come from a place where the love of this corporation and what is best for kids outweighs any disagreement they may have had. Mr. Groves agrees that Mr. Shail is extremely deserving of this recognition and thanked Mr. Shail for his service to this corporation.

- Mr. Williamson explained that 17 years ago when he joined the Board he leaned on Mr. Shail learning so much from him. Mr. Williamson said he hopes the community knows of all the things Mr. Shail has accomplished during his years on the Board. The Board is a team but Mr. Shail was in the lead as a driving force in the advancement of technology at NPUSC. He thanked Mr. Shail and wished him the best in his retirement.
- Mr. DeMeyer added that in his second year on the Board the definite leader and mentor is Mr. Shail. He feels that collectively they are a Board that may not always agree but always finds a way to make the best decisions possible. Mr. DeMeyer said that he looks forward to working with the Board for years to come. Regarding the COVID situation, Mr. DeMeyer stated he is confident in the 100% return to school for our students, monitoring the COVID data daily. We need to keep moving forward getting students back into the classroom.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Groves made the motion to adjourn the meeting.