

NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
October 17, 2011
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, Room C234 on Monday, October 17, 2011 at 7:30 p.m.

Members Present

Mr. John Myefski, President
Ms. Carol F. Ducommun, Vice President
Mr. Alan Dolinko
Mr. Peter Fischer
Ms. Lori Goldstein
Mr. F. Malcolm Harris

Administrator Present

Dr. Linda L. Yonke, Superintendent
Mr. Donald Goers, Associate Superintendent
Mr. Paul Sally, Assistant Superintendent
for Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Timothy Hayes, Assistant Superintendent
for Student Services
Ms. Katherine Schindler, Assistant Principal –
Winnetka Campus
Ms. Denise Hibbard, Assistant Principal –
Northfield Campus

Members Absent

Mr. Patrick O'Donoghue

Also Present

Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Mr. Christopher Johnson, Director of Technology; Mr. Matt Ottaviano, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services; Mr. John Neiweem, Director of Physical Plant Services; Mrs. Linda Knier, Director of Academic Services; Ms. Michele Slav, Director of Business Services; Mr. George Sanders, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Laurel Burman, Director of Special Education; Ms. Athena Arvanitis, Director of Student Life; Ms. Denise Hibbard, Assistant Principal, Northfield Campus; Mr. Richard Corrus, NTESPA Co-President; Mr. Marty Laffey, President NTEA, Mathematics Department; Ms. Alissa Hammer, Mathematics Department; Mr. Matt Temple, Music Department; Mr. Kerry Hall, Social Studies Department; Ms. Susan Holderread, Social Studies Department; Ms. Kelly Breiner, Science Department; Ms. Colleen Sheridan, Health Services Department; Mr. Jason Boumstein, Technology Education Department; Ms. Aileen Geary, Social Studies Department; Mr. John Huston, Chicago Tribune; Mr. Wes Bauman; Mr. Greg Robitaille; Ms. Elizabeth Robitaille; and members of the Community.

I. CALL TO ORDER – 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Myefski called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to Order at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Myefski welcomed those in attendance and noted anyone can address the Board during the Communications portion of the meeting. He asked those who are interested in speaking to complete the request form located at the rear table next to the copies of the Public Participation guidelines and agendas.

II. Closed Session – (No Closed Session)

III. Business Meeting - Open Session – 7:30 p.m. – C234

Mr. John Myefski, having called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order in Room C234 at 7:30 p.m., asked for a roll call. All members were present except for Mr. Patrick O'Donoghue. Dr. Yonke noted that Mr. O'Donoghue was away due to a death in his family. Mr. Myefski also noted that there was no Closed Session for this meeting.

IV. Minutes

Mr. Myefski stated the first agenda item was to approve the minutes. Mr. Fischer moved and Mr. Dolinko seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of September 19, 2011, open and closed session. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Ducommun, Mr. Fischer, Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Harris, Mr. Dolinko, Mr. Myefski

NAY: None

The motion passed.

V. Communications

Mr. Myefski noted three email letters he received since the last regular meeting. He stated that he will always respond to all correspondence sent to the Board and will review them at the next regular Board meeting. Mr. Myefski related that the three messages were from Mr. Glenn Golden, Ms. Charlotte Aines, and Mr. Steven Federico about corporate sponsorships, salaries, and athletics respectively. Dr. Yonke also mentioned that she received a letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Miller, also about corporate sponsorship. Mr. Greg Robitaille addressed the Board with his concerns on the budget and long term budget trends.

VI. Special Orders of Business

A. Report from Campus Principals and Assistant Superintendents

Dr. Yonke noted that Tim Dohrer and Paul Waechtler were away at the Illinois Association of Principals Conference and that Assistant Principals Katherine Schindler and Denise Hibbard will be reporting about the Winnetka and Northfield campus activities.

Ms. Denise Hibbard, Assistant Principal of the Northfield Campus, reported on the numerous events at the freshman campus. Interim progress reports have been mailed home, with the first quarter ending October 28. Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for November 9 and 10. Other recent events include Homecoming celebrations, the Freshman mixer dance, and the Freshman-Go-To-School Night on October 6. The freshman advisers are preparing students for the Names Program which will take place on November 30 and December 1. This is the 10th year of our sponsorship of this program at New Trier which focuses on “different does not mean less.”

Ms. Katherine Schindler, Assistant Principal of the Winnetka Campus also reported spirited Homecoming activities at the east campus including the well-attended (1800) Homecoming Dance. The fall play *Romeo and Juliet* was a wonderful success and Lagniappe/Potpourri starts this week. Ms. Schindler provided an overview of events taking place in the adviser year groups. The sophomore adviser rooms are involved in the Bridge Builders Program which assists sophomore students in their transition to the Winnetka Campus. Approximately 700 junior parents attended a New Trier Parents’ Association presentation on the college application process. Junior adviser rooms are choosing their service projects for the year or participating in self defense training in the female adviser rooms. Senior adviser rooms are working with Post High School Counseling to assist with the academic and social changes of senior year, planning the GAP Fair, and pursuing their Habitat for Humanity fundraising goal of \$100,000.

Mr. Tim Hayes, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services highlighted two events. The first was a meeting that occurred two weeks ago for the Parent Committee of Voices in Equity. He noted it was an open meeting for all parents in the District to discuss the different experiences that students have at New Trier. The next meeting for this group is in December. The second event will be on Tuesday, October 25, when Dr. Yong Zhao will speak in the Gaffney Auditorium at 7:00 p.m. on “What Does a High Quality Education Mean?” This presentation is sponsored by the New Trier Parents’ Association and Family Awareness Network (FAN). Dr. Zhao spoke to the staff at an Institute Day last year and Mr. Hayes highly recommends attending his presentation.

Mr. Paul Sally, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, reported on a Freshman Parent Coffee that morning which he attended with Denise Hibbard and Josh Seldess. Mr. Sally also stated that the PSAT/ACT testing day on October 12 was very successful. He commended Linda Knier and the testing staff for all their efforts to ensure that the day ran smoothly. Attendance for a single testing day was a record high; furthermore, he noted that it was the lowest absence rate of any regular school day so far this year. Mr. Sally also noted that further information on testing conditions will be presented to the Board at next month’s meeting.

Mr. Don Goers reported on the three FOIA requests received since the last Board of Education regular meeting. The first was regarding a payment bond provided by a contractor for the work done over the summer; the second was for correspondence between a parent and the administration; and the third was a follow-up to a previous request. All three requests have been completed.

B. Participation Report

Mr. Tim Hayes presented the annual Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities Report for 2010-11. He noted that the Extracurricular Program is one of the strengths of New Trier, allowing for multiple opportunities for students to learn and become more involved. These opportunities speak to numerous areas of the Strategic Plan 2005-2010, such as the Climate of Exploration, the Intrinsic Value of Learning, Connections Among Experiences, and a Healthy Balanced Life. While the report measures participation as total participations and total number of students participating, Mr. Hayes highlighted the fact that 97% of all students are engaged in some extracurricular activity either inside or outside of school. These activities include athletics, performing arts, and clubs as well as job and service opportunities outside of school. Mr. Hayes and Dr. Yonke responded to Board members’ comments and questions as further discussion followed on trends in selection of activities, facility capacity for extracurricular activities, the inclusion of activities outside of school, the new information on gender participation, and the use of this information in upcoming student fee discussions. Dr. Yonke thanked Mr. Hayes for all his work and noted the report’s improvement every year in the quality and quantity of data gathered and the report’s more comprehensive nature.

C. Enrollment / Class Size Report

Mr. Sally reviewed the Class Size Report for the 2011-2012 school year. He noted that the overall mean class size increased from the 2010-2011 of 22.4 to 22.9, which was not surprising given the increase in student enrollment. Efforts continue to minimize the number of large classes (30 or more) and small classes (16 or less), though there are significantly more classes with more than 30 students this year. An increase in sections ranging from 26-29 students was also noted. Board members expressed some concern about the increased class sizes. Board discussion followed on the Social Work department, demographic dynamics in the District, drivers’ education, IGSS classes, and class scheduling flexibility.

D. New Course Proposals

Mr. Sally presented the new course proposals for the 2012-2013 school year. Six new courses have been brought forward for the school year and one for Summer School. There is one major revision and name change to a music course in Summer School. Speech & Theatre’s course called Improvisation and On-Camera Acting has been dropped. Mr. Sally highlighted the two Math additions, Algebra 2 Essentials and Intro to Calculus and Statistics. He also noted that the Theatre Ensemble courses offer more options for students to be successful. Mr. Sally pointed out that the three other new courses are extending current programs in Spanish and Engineering. Mr. Sally responded to Board members’ comments and questions. Dr. Yonke noted that the Board will be asked to approve the new courses at the next regular Board meeting in November.

VII. Administrative Items

A. Financial Reports for September 2011

Mr. Goers reviewed the first quarterly financial reports, noting that the revenues are within 0.10% of last year at this time. Expenses are also following closely to last year’s trend. He stated that there were no budget concerns and that the New Trier Extension’s revenue collection is ahead of last year. Mr. Goers responded to Board members’ questions and comments. Discussion followed on the new cafeteria food service.

B. Estimate of Proposed Levy

Mr. Goers reviewed his report on the Proposed Tax Levy that included information on the 2010 tax rate (which impacts the collection of tax revenue over the next few months) and the proposed 2011 Tax Levy Estimate (which will support the 2012-13 school year budget). The 2010 Agency Tax Rate Report received from the Cook County Clerk’s Office showed the 2010 tax levy, excluding bond and interest, was reduced by nearly \$388,000. Mr. Goers, however, had projected a reduction of approximately \$782,000 which then netted out to an approximate \$400,000 gain as a result of the tax revenue generated from new property. At the same time the actual equalized assessed evaluation (EAV) was lower than projected and resulted in an increase in our projected tax rate for the Operating Funds from \$1.305 to \$1.417 and from \$1.357 to \$1.474 overall. Mr. Goers explained the details of the various memos and responded to Board members’ questions. The proposed estimate of the 2011 Levy is regulated by two legislative acts: the Truth in Taxation Act and the Property Tax Extension Limitation Act (tax cap). For 2011, the limitation is 1.5% (exclusive of new property adjustment) which is based on the December 2010 CPI. Other factors in reaching the 2011 Estimate are the Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) and the amount of new construction projected in 2011. Based on Cook County’s projections on EAV and our projection for new property, Mr. Goers recommended a levy of \$88,233,400. The Truth in Taxation Act requires the Board to approve the estimate and if it is 105% over the previous year, a public notice and hearing are to be scheduled. Historically, the District has published the notice and held a public hearing regardless of the levy amount. Again, Mr. Goers responded to Board members’ questions. Ms. Ducommun moved that the Board approve the 2011 Levy estimate of \$88,223,400 and that a public hearing be held at the December 12, 2011 regularly scheduled Board meeting. Mr. Dolinko seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Harris, Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Fischer, Ms. Ducommun, Mr. Dolinko, Mr. Myefski

NAY: None

The motion passed.

C. School Calendar of 2012-2013

Dr. Yonke reviewed the 2012-13 School Year Calendar, explaining the details and changes from this year’s calendar. She noted that there is an additional day of instruction as negotiated in the New Trier Association Agreement. Winter and Spring Breaks coincide with the township sender schools; however, the start and end dates do not. Board discussion followed on the continuity of instructional days, half days off, scheduling around the state swim meet, and scheduling full or half weeks for the Winter Break. Mr. Dolinko moved that the Board approve the 2012-2013 School Year Calendar as presented. Ms. Goldstein seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Fischer, Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Harris, Mr. Dolinko, Ms. Ducommun, Mr. Myefski

NAY: None

The motion passed.

D. Student Fee Discussion

Dr. Yonke reviewed the work of a recent Board Finance Committee meeting at which student fees were discussed. The minutes of that meeting and a schedule of current student fees were included with the Board materials for the Board’s discussion. Dr. Yonke described the fee structures as they exist now, and reported the questions asked by the Finance Committee, which were: 1.) Is it a goal of the Board to generate more revenue from student fees, to keep the fee collections revenue neutral, or to reduce the total cost of fees and books that student/families have to pay? 2.) Does the Board wish to assess athletic/activity or course fees according to the cost of that sport/activity or course, or continue with a flat fee that is equal to or greater than the fee we charge now? and, 3.) It is a goal of the Board to reduce the cost of books for

students/families by charging more for extracurricular activities or optional programs?

Dr. Yonke noted that the Committee was looking for direction and feedback from the Board on student fees. Mr. Dolinko reported on the Committee discussion which began by asking whether it was a goal to reduce the cost of books for all families by raising fees in other areas such as athletics and activities. That discussion led to the question about overall costs to families of fees and books, and to the feasibility of raising fees for extracurricular activities to partially cover the cost of books. Mr. Dolinko felt the Board's discussion should focus on how the Board should allocate District funds to help families. Mr. Myefski reported that the township sender schools assess separate fees for the various sports and activities. Board discussion followed on identifying a philosophy of fee assessment, ascertaining fee schedules of other area high schools, determining the cost of a public education, and seeking additional information that would be helpful for further study of the issue. Dr. Yonke stated the administration would provide more data for discussion at the November Board meeting.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- Bill List for the Period September 1-30, 2011
- Personnel Report

Mr. Myefski asked if any member would like to remove any items of the Consent Agenda for separate discussion. No items were requested for discussion. Mr. Myefski asked for a motion on the Consent Agenda. Mr. Dolinko moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda, which includes the Bill List for the Period of September 1-30, 2011 as presented and the Personnel Report as presented. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Harris, Mr. Dolinko, Ms. Ducommun, Mr. Fischer, Mr. Myefski

NAY: None

IX. Board Member Reports

Mr. Dolinko reported for the Finance Committee, which in addition to discussing student fees, also considered placeholder information for long range projections. The Committee recommended that projections for future years be based on past patterns of revenue collection in each area, being careful not to either overestimate or underestimate the percent change from year to year. The question of fundraising for the potential installation of synthetic turf in the stadium and athletic fields was raised. The issue of seeking corporate sponsors was discussed, and Mr. Dolinko queried if Board Policy could even be amended in time for such a project. Discussion followed with Mr. Myefski noting that the Board would be open to reviewing the fundraising and corporate sponsorship issue along with hearing the views of the Policy Committee of 2008, which wrote the existing Board policy on naming and donations. Dr. Yonke delineated the existing policy on naming and donations and agreed it would be difficult to modify the policy before a decision is reached on the turf field project. She will report to the Policy Committee and the Board about the history of these policies and the reasons for their development.

Mr. Harris reported about the latest Booster Club meeting. Mr. Myefski approached the Booster Club after a recent Finance Committee meeting and Board presentation on synthetic turf, asking if their organization would again be willing to commit to their previous offer of \$500,000 toward the synthetic turf project. Following further conversations, Dr. Yonke asked the Booster Club Board at their meeting if the Club would be able to increase that amount to \$1,000,000 if the Board approved installation of turf in the stadium and the practice fields. The Booster Club's discussion then included options to raise this new amount. The discussion also centered on recognition of donors. A small subcommittee of the Booster Club has been formed to study the feasibility of such a fundraising campaign as requested by the Board and Administration. Mr. Harris noted that the Booster Club would like to know before the end of this year if this project will go forward. Dr. Yonke concurred with Mr. Harris about the meeting with the Booster Club Board and remarked that the request was positively received with strong interest on their part.

Mr. Fischer reported on the New Trier Education Foundation meeting, held in one of the new innovative classrooms at Winnetka which the Foundation helped to fund. Topics for discussion were a recap of the Foundation's Golf outing and the upcoming Alumni Hall of Honor Dinner in March 2012. They are also interested in increasing methods of fundraising (i.e. capital mailing campaigns) which have not been used recently. Mr. Fischer also shared discussions at the two All School Forums which he attended. The first meeting centered on the various choices everyone makes. The second was a follow-up on topics such as developing balanced life-styles, making appropriate choices, and working with colleges on presenting accurate expectations and dispelling myths about the college admissions process.

Ms. Goldstein shared two events sponsored by the New Trier Parents' Association, the first being the speaking engagement of Dr. Yong Zhao on October 25. The second event, sponsored by the Class of 2014, will feature a candid discussion about drinking, driving, and drugs called "Keeping our Kids Safe," and is to be held tomorrow night, October 18.

Ms. Goldstein also is the Board representative at the Ethical Conduct & Global Citizenship (ECGC) meetings. She reported that the Committee is updating its website. Mr. Ed Dunkelblau of the Charrm'd Foundation produced pamphlets on social, emotional learning which are available to all. The Student ECGC committee is now an official club. The *Pioneer Press* wrote a Guest Column praising the work of ECGC. The Parent committee is working on their mission statement, and will be presenting with FAN a program by Dr. Ken Ginsburg, author of "Authentic Success: Raising Youth to Thrive in a Challenging World."

Lastly, Ms. Goldstein reported for NSSED which is continuing work on the fee structure. NSSED is beginning a new initiative for a school, family, community partnership. She reported that three member districts are considering withdrawal from NSSED. Negotiations are currently taking place with Lake Bluff and Lake Forest School Districts about their membership in NSSED. The NSSED Foundation and Temple Jeremiah sponsored an event on Sunday, October 16 called "People with Disabilities in Film." The event included panel discussions and documentaries, one of which featured Peter Ten Brink, a recent graduate of New Trier.

Ms. Ducommun reported for the Fine Arts Association which is assisting with fundraising for the Australia trip in cooperation with the Music Department. Approximately 185 students are planning to perform during Spring Break in March of 2012. Fundraising has begun with parent and student groups, events, online giving, and other options. A Parent Benefit is planned for January 15, 2012.

Mr. Myefski reported on a meeting he and Dr. Yonke attended with the Village of Winnetka regarding storm water management. The Village and other local agencies met to discuss possible options for storm water retention in light of the recent severe storms. Some options included use of District athletic fields. Mr. Myefski noted that consensus seemed to support a Winnetka version of a Deep Tunnel which would direct storm water out to Lake Michigan. This will likely be discussed at the next Facilities Steering Committee on November 2. The Technology Committee will meet tomorrow, October 18.

X. Board Members' Calendar of Events

- Calendar of Events

Dr. Yonke highlighted current and upcoming events which included Lagniappe/Potpourri later this week on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, October 19-21; Dr. Yong Zhao will be speaking on Tuesday, October 25; the Board Finance Committee will meet November 7; the Facilities Steering Committee will meet on November 2; Parent Teacher Conferences are on November 9 and 10; Veteran's Day, November 11 is a school holiday; teachers' Institute Day is on November 18 (*which is also a no-school-for-students day*) and the next Regular Board of Education meeting is on November 21.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Goldstein moved that the Board adjourn the meeting. Mr. Fischer seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote being taken, all members were in favor.

The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lou Anne Kelly, Secretary

John Myefski, President