

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

**January 18, 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, Northfield, Illinois, Room C234 on Monday, January 18, 2011 at 7:30 p.m.

**Members Present**

Ms. Wendy Serrino, President  
Mr. John Myefski, Vice President  
Mr. Alan Dolinko  
Ms. Carol F. Ducommun  
Mr. F. Malcolm Harris  
Mr. Robert Merrick  
Mr. James B. Koch

**Administrator Present**

Dr. Linda L. Yonke, Superintendent  
Mr. Donald Goers, Associate Superintendent  
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Assistant Principal -  
Northfield Campus  
Mr. Timothy Hayes, Assistant Superintendent  
for Student Services  
Mr. Paul Sally, Assistant Superintendent for  
Curriculum & Instruction

**Also Present**

Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Ms. Laurel Burman, Director of Special Education; Mr. Chris Johnson, Director of Technology; Mr. Matt Ottaviano, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services; Dr. Debbie Stacey, Director of Academic Services; Mr. John Neiweem, Director of Physical Plant Services; Mr. George Sanders, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Michele Slav, Director of Business Services; Mr. Richard Corrus, Co-President NTESPA; Mr. Jim Burnside, President, New Trier Education Association, Science Department; Ms. Athena Arvanitis, Director of Student Life; Ms. Katherine Schindler, Assistant Principal for Student Services; Ms. Kristine Kelsh, Mathematics Department; Ms. Susan Holderread, Social Studies Department; Mr. Marty Laffey, Mathematics Department; Ms. Elizabeth Blodgett, Business Services Department; Mr. Wes Bauman, Ms. Jude Offerle; Mr. Daniel Fox, Ms. Lili Martinka; Ms. Lori Goldstein; Ms. Vanessa Rachmaninoff, and members of the Community.

**I. CALL TO ORDER – 6:30 p.m.**

Ms. Serrino called the regular meeting to order in open session at 6:33 p.m. and asked for a roll call attendance. All members were present.

**Adjournment to Closed Session**

Mr. Dolinko moved and Mr. Merrick seconded the motion to adjourn to Closed Session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District and collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their Representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Ducommun, Mr. Harris, Mr. Koch, Mr. Merrick, Mr. Myefski, Mr. Dolinko, Ms. Serrino

NAY: None.

The motion passed unanimously. The members adjourned to Closed Session.

**II. Closed Session – 6:38 p.m. – Rm. A201A**

The Closed Session meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

**Reconvene to Open Session**

**III. BUSINESS MEETING**

Ms. Wendy Serrino called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order in open session in Room C234 at 7:34 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. Ms. Serrino thanked the Community for their input on the Community Survey. The Board is pleased with the response rate which is at 19%, similar to the participation level of the community survey of twelve years ago. Public comment requests and guidelines are located on the side table. Ms. Serrino requested a motion to approve the minutes.

**IV. Minutes**

Mr. Koch moved and Mr. Harris seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2010 Regular meetings (open session), and the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 7, 2011 (open session). Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Harris, Mr. Koch, Mr. Merrick, Mr. Myefski, Mr. Dolinko, Ms. Ducommun, Ms. Serrino

NAY: None.

The motion passed unanimously.

**V. Communications**

Ms. Serrino welcomed all in attendance and invited members of the Community to share their comments. Ms. Lili Martinka and Mr. Daniel Fox responded with questions and concerns regarding the Community Survey.

**VI. Special Orders of Business**

**A. Survey Update**

Dr. Yonke reported on the Community Survey and the letter from Dr. John Gatta, President of the ECRA Group. Dr. Yonke noted that approximately 4300 responses have been received at ECRA to date, which is statistically a good percentage of the 23,000 households surveyed. Dr. Gatta's letter noted the percent of sample from each of the communities very nearly reflects the same percentage of households those communities hold in the population of the township. Dr. Yonke reviewed the timeline leading up to the arrival of surveys in homes and noted that as late as November 19 it was the Administration's understanding that the target of early December was still in effect. It was noted though, that at the December 13 Board of Education meeting, none of the Board members had yet received the survey. Dr. Yonke opened the discussion to the Board for further comments. Ms. Serrino responded to the issue of cost, noting that ECRA will cover the \$9,000 for the subsequent postcard mailing announcing the change to the survey deadline. She also noted that the overall cost of the survey was less than anticipated by \$.75 per survey. Dr. Yonke responded to the concern that some residents had received 2 cover letters and no survey in their mailing. Approximately 50 residents phone or emailed requesting a copy of the survey or the access code to complete the survey. All were accommodated by ECRA with their requests. Mr. Dolinko was pleased with the close to 20% response rate yet expressed his displeasure with ECRA's execution of the survey product which should have been flawless. Mr. Koch agreed and noted that the entire Board is dismayed by the inefficiency. Ms. Ducommun noted that the execution of delivering the surveys has been a huge embarrassment and that greater caution is required when working with vendors; someone should be assigned to ECRA and the Board should have had more input into choosing printers. Mr. Harris echoed the sentiments and added for clarification, that the drive to survey the community before the holidays was to reach those households that winter in warmer climates and might not be able to be reached until April or May 2011. It was felt that that portion of the population was too important to be missed. Mr. Merrick noted that Dr. Gatta's letter indicated that surveys will continue to be accepted until January 30. Dr. Yonke responded that indeed this is the case due to mailing delays and is typical in survey analysis to wait some time for straggling responses to come in.

**B. Report from Campus Principals and Assistant Superintendents**

Mr. Paul Waechtler, Assistant Principal for the Northfield Campus, reviewed the numerous activities at the Freshman Campus. Events which occurred before the break included the winter jacket service project for Dulles School. Over 400 jackets were collected to give to our partner elementary school in the city. All staff celebrated a pot-luck Holiday luncheon with choral groups singing special lyrics to Jan Borja. Mr. Waechtler highlighted the school exhibit "New Trier Through the Ages" now on display in the B-Building Student Commons area. January finds the freshmen preparing for their first high school semester exams and welcoming the 1,161 registrants for next year's freshman class with information given out at the four Academic Life nights. Their course choices are due in February with class sectioning and scheduling occurring at the end of February. The Visual and Performing Arts evening introduces new students to arts information while the Kinesis Dance performances in the Cornog in early February showcases the dance program.

Dr. Tim Dohrer, Principal of the Winnetka Campus highlighted the happenings and events of that campus. Dr. Dohrer reviewed the semester exam schedule which is going on this week. Earlier in January the Jazz Band and Jazz Choir traveled to New Orleans to attend and perform at the Jazz Education Convention. Students visited the home they assisted in building through Habitat for Humanity as well as performed for a K-5 Charter School. Significant for New Trier was the opportunity to be the only high school group to perform in the Convention Ballroom for the conference. February 5<sup>th</sup> will be the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Jazz Festival in the Gaffney Auditorium at 7:30 pm featuring the Mingus Big Band Orchestra. Lastly, "Second City Lampoons New Trier" will be on Saturday, January 29 at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., and tickets are still available.

Mr. Tim Hayes, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, reported further on student service work by highlighting the New Trier vs. Evanston Basketball game this past Friday night. The teams meet at the Northwestern University Welsh-Ryan Arena twice; the second game will be on February 12. Proceeds from the games are donated to the American Cancer Society. Mr. Hayes also noted the follow up discussion on Positivity scheduled for January 19 at both 9:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. in C234 on Northfield's Campus. This event is sponsored by the parent group for ECGC, Wilmette Jr. High School and the Charmed Foundation.

Mr. Paul Sally, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, announced that there will be two Open Community Forums on January 26 and February 8 to further discuss and view the video about Teaching and Learning. Advertising for these events will be posted in the local press, and the Parent's Press as well as through email. Mr. Sally also responded to Board members' questions on the scheduling of semester exams and the implications of any changes to them.

Dr. Dohrer added that the Turnabout Dance is scheduled for February 19. Tickets will go on sale starting February 7 in the Activity offices on both campuses during the lunch periods.

Mr. Don Goers, Associate Superintendent, reported on the FOIA requests received since the last Regular Board of Education meeting on December 13. One was related to records for the New Trier Alumni Achievement Awards, which was responded to and closed out. Others requested information on New Trier Superintendents since 1980; School Board elections; and Special Ed transportation. All were answered and closed out. The last request was received today and will be reported on at the next Board meeting.

#### **C. Budget Assumptions & Parameters**

Mr. Goers reported on the 2011-12 Budget Calendar, Assumptions and Parameters with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation highlighting important details. He reviewed the calendar which shows the Superintendent recommending a Preliminary 2011-12 Budget at the May meeting; the Board to approve the Tentative 11-12 Budget in June and Final 2011-12 Budget adoption in July with the Public Hearing. Mr. Goers noted the key variables of revenues focusing on the tax cap, tax revenues, the interest rate and State and Federal revenues. Variables for the Budget expenditures include enrollment, student faculty ratio, staffing, retirements, salary increases, employee benefits, purchased services, supplies, capital outlay, due/fees, special education tuition, transportation services, retirement-IMRF, and contingency. Mr. Goers reviewed all of these and the current and projected operating fund revenues and expenditures. A list of cost containment efforts were noted as well as best budgetary practices in an economic downturn. Mr. Goers invited questions and comments from the Board members. Ms. Ducommun inquired on the flexibility of the master schedule and the ability to make changes. Mr. Sally and Dr. Yonke responded on the excellent job of the Department Chairs in balancing the larger and smaller classes. Mr. Dolinko noted that the discussions are still very early on in the process and time will bring the financial picture into clearer focus. Mr. Koch cautioned that cuts should not compromise the importance of providing excellent teachers and administrators.

#### **D. Classroom Design Update**

Mr. Paul Sally and Mr. Christopher Johnson are co-chairs of the Classroom Research and Design Committee and prepared an update report of their work over the last year. Mr. Johnson stated that their mission was to study the impact of technology, furniture and space on classroom design. To those ends, two classrooms at Winnetka and one at Northfield were transformed into experimental classrooms to address issues of learning in the classroom. The rooms are larger by approximately 300 square feet (900 square feet each) and include new adjustable desks on rollers that provide space below the chair for books and backpacks as well as movement for collaborative learning; three projection screens; document cameras in the rooms as well as whiteboards and class sets of laptops and cameras. The initial responses to the changes have been very positive. The committee is compiling the feedback from teachers and students using these classrooms to determine which attributes work best and the feasibility of replicating them in other rooms. Board discussion followed on the types of teaching most conducive in these settings and the methods of assessment of these changes.

#### **E. Kasarda Report**

Dr. Yonke reported on the new projections of the 2010 Kasarda Report. This report is produced by Dr. John Kasarda and is provided to all the elementary districts and the high school. The report covers birth rates, kindergarten enrollment, in-migration and students who transfer out. Dr. Yonke noted that the numbers are slightly down from previous reports, however not dramatically. The projections for New Trier over 15 years is that student population will drop by approximately 300 students and then stabilize after that. Dr. Yonke also noted that housing trends will be worth watching over this time period. Board discussion followed with Dr. Yonke responding to comments.

#### **F. Illinois Clean Energy Foundation Grant Proposal**

Mr. Goers reminded the Board of the Special Meeting on January 7, 2011 at which Mr. Neiweem presented the ISBE School Energy Efficiency Project Grant. New Trier qualified for that grant as the District had a pre-approved project scheduled for the summer of 2011 to replace the roof of the F Building at Northfield. This was one of the Health- Life-Safety projects approved by the Board in 2008. The grant is for up to \$250,000 to be applied to the purchase of insulation for that project. Tonight's request for approval is for an instructional wind turbine grant proposal to the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation. This foundation promotes the development of renewable energy resources. The 30' tall turbine would be installed at the Northfield Campus at the southeast corner of the C Building. It will include a data monitoring component that has internet connectivity permitting access to the information from both campuses. The addition of this wind turbine will enhance the science and engineering curriculums allowing our students to learn about green energy solutions. The total cost of the installation of the wind turbine system is \$18,990. The Foundation will fund 90% of the project and New Trier will contribute \$1899.00. Mr. Neiweem invited comments and responded to Board members' questions. Mr. Koch moved that the Board approve the recommendation to apply for a Grant to the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation as presented. Mr. Merrick seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Koch, Mr. Merrick, Mr. Myefski, Mr. Dolinko, Ms. Ducommun, Mr. Harris, Ms. Serrino

NAY: None.

The motion passed unanimously.

**VII. Administrative Items**

**A. Financial Reports for December 2010**

**B. Budget Status Report**

Mr. Goers reported on the month's financial statements and the Budget Status Report. He reviewed the cash flow statements in which he noted that tax revenue has been received in December. The primary focus was on the Budget Status Report which covers the Operating Fund Revenues, and the Quarterly Revenue and Expenditure Reports. Mr. Goers noted that purchased services are up due to increased legal fees and special education due process hearings; however, closer monitoring of cost containment efforts will cover these increases. Mr. Goers also reviewed the New Trier Extension Report and the Cafeteria Food Service Report. Mr. Goers responded to Board member questions.

**C. ISBE Energy Efficiency Grant Proposal**

*(see agenda item VI. F.)*

**VIII. Consent Agenda**

- **Bill List for the Period, December 1-31, 2010**
- **Personnel Report**
- **Closed Session Records**

Ms. Serrino reviewed the items within the consent agenda and asked if any items should be removed for discussion. Dr. Yonke took the opportunity to announce and congratulate Mr. Paul Waechtler for his recommendation to the position of Principal Freshman Campus effective July 1, 2011. Mr. Waechtler will be replacing Ms. Jan Borja who is retiring. Dr. Yonke also announced the appointment of Ms. Linda Knier to the position of Director of Academic Services. Ms. Knier will be replacing Dr. Debbie Stacey who will also be retiring this year. Mr. Waechtler expressed his gratitude for the opportunity and privilege to serve as the Freshman Campus Principal and looked forward to working with everyone and serving the community. Ms. Serrino again asked if any items should be removed for discussion. None were proposed. Mr. Dolinko moved that the Board approve the Bill List for the Period, December 1-31, 2010 as presented; and further that the Board approve the Personnel Report and Addendum as presented, which includes the appointment of Linda Knier as Director of Academic Services, effective July 1, 2011 and the appointment of Paul Waechtler as the Principal of the Northfield Freshman Campus, effective July 1, 2011; and further move that the Board approve the opening of the Closed Session minutes of July 2009 through December 2009; and that the Board also approve the disposition of Closed Session meeting tapes of meetings of January 2009 through June 2009. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Merrick, Mr. Myefski, Mr. Dolinko, Ms. Ducommun, Mr. Harris, Mr. Koch, Ms. Serrino

NAY: None.

The motion passed unanimously.

*(congratulatory applause)*

**IX. Board Member Reports**

Mr. Koch reported that the NSSSED Board was working on a final draft of their Budget.

Mr. Harris noted that the Booster Club's benefit event "Second City Lampoons New Trier" will be on January 29. He also reported that they have spent approximately \$35,000 to assist various departments and activities. Mr. Harris stated again that the organization is saving a significant amount of their funds toward the installation of artificial turf playing fields, while understanding the position of the Board and the economy.

Mr. Myefski reported the Fine Arts Committee is looking for suggestions from the Board to focus their fundraising efforts.

Ms. Ducommun reported that the Parents' Association planning for the Graduation Party is in full swing. She also noted that the All School Forum continues to meet to discuss timely topics among staff, parents and students. Anyone is welcome to come in and listen.

**X. Board Members' Calendar of Events**

- Calendar of Events

Dr. Yonke noted that the Second City event is on January 29 as previously mentioned and the Parents' Association Board Meeting/District Dialogue is on Tuesday, January 25 here in room C234. Don Goers and Randy Oberembt will be attending. Saturday, February 5 is the Annual Jazz Festival and the second meeting of New Trier vs. Evanston basketball game is on February 12.

- Board Members' Requests for Staff Research and Suggested Future Agenda Items  
Ms. Serrino noted that discussion for the turf will be added. Ms. Ducommun requested that the Northfield Renovation recap be presented to the public in February.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Koch moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Dolinko seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote being taken, all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Serrino adjourned the meeting at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lou Anne Kelly, Secretary

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Wendy M. Serrino, President