

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 18, 2020
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 Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Ms. Cathy Albrecht, President
Mr. Keith Dronen
Ms. Carol Ducommun
Dr. Marc Glucksman, Vice President
Ms. Jean Hahn
Mr. Brad McLane
Mr. Greg Robitaille

Administrators Present

Dr. Paul Sally, Superintendent
Dr. Timothy Hayes, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
Mr. Christopher Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations
Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education
Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal – Winnetka Campus
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

Also Present

Dr. Chimille Dillard, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Mr. Myron Spiwak, Director of Business Services; Mr. David Ladd, Music and Theatre Department Chair; Ms. Talar Khosdeghian, Music Accompanist and Educational Support Professionals Association President; Mr. Matt Ravenscraft, Modern and Classical Languages Faculty; Ms. Jen Karakosta, Applied Arts Faculty and New Trier Educational Association President-Elect; Mr. Don Kim, Mathematics Department Coordinator; Mr. Mark Hines, Modern and Classical Languages Faculty; Ms. Lucy Riner, Kinetic Wellness Department Faculty; Ms. Hannah Hsieh, Science Department Faculty; Mr. Spiro Bolos, Social Studies Faculty and New Trier Educational Association President; Ms. Deb Kind, New Trier Learning Center Department Chair; Ms. Melissa Duffy, Business Education Department Faculty and Career Services Coordinator; Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Mr. Eric Johnson, Technology Department; Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary; members of the press and community.

BUSINESS MEETING

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

Ms. Albrecht called the Regular Meeting of February 18, 2020 of the Board of Education to order at 5:30 p.m. in Room C234. Roll call was taken and all members were present, except for Dr. Glucksman, Mr. McLane and Mr. Dronen. Ms. Albrecht asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Ms. Ducommun moved that the Board adjourns to closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity; collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; and security procedures and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property. Mr. Robitaille seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Hahn, Ms. Ducommun Mr. Robitaille, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

ABSENT: Dr. Glucksman, Mr. McLane, Mr. Dronen

The motion passed.

II. CLOSED SESSION – 5:30 p.m. – Rm. A201A

III. BUSINESS MEETING

Open Session – 7:00 p.m. – C234

Ms. Albrecht called to order the Open Session, Regular Business Meeting of the New Trier High School Board of Education of February 18, 2020, at 7:06 p.m. All members were present.

IV. Minutes

Ms. Albrecht asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 21, 2020 (open and closed session). There were no such requests. Ms. Hahn moved, and Mr. Robitaille seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 21, 2020 (open and closed session). Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Ducommun, Dr. Glucksman, 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 from the back table. No one came forward to address the Board.

VI. Special Orders of Business

A. Choir Opera Performance

Mr. David Ladd, Music and Theatre Department Chair, introduced a piece from the Choir Opera Musical he is directing, Jesus Christ Superstar. The musical runs March 5th – 8th. This year is the 100th anniversary of choir opera at New Trier and the 50th anniversary of the release of Jesus Christ Superstar. Mr. Ladd shared some unique aspects of New Trier's performance, such as casting female students in typical male roles and the combination of the symphony and chamber orchestras, which will sit on the stage, bringing the set down into the pit. There are over 220 students involved in the production, from the performers to the musicians to the stage crew. Mr. Ladd went on to share some background about Jesus Christ Superstar and the song, Heaven On Their Minds, that Ms. Sarah Bunge then sang in her role as Judas. Ms. Bunge was accompanied by Ms. Talar Khosdeghian.

B. Report from Campus Principals

Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal of the Northfield Campus, shared the following information about events and programs at that campus:

- The Freshman Play, Page to Stage, took place last Monday and Tuesday. Ms. Anne James-Noonan, Performing Arts Coordinator, directed 68 students from the freshmen theater classes. Each class performed one act from Alice in Wonderland in front of family and friends.
- Freshmen advisers are working with course request verifications as students plan for next year.
- Trevapalooza is this Saturday, which many freshmen usually attend.
- For Black History Month, students have made announcements highlighting prominent African-Americans. Music was also played before school and during passing periods from those African-Americans with Chicago connections.
- Work continues for the Class of 2024. The campus recently hosted "All About Electives" on January 29th.
- Course Selection Conferences with eighth grade families from the Township Sender Schools have also taken place. Mr. Waechtler thanked Ms. Gail Gamrath, Assistant Principal at the Northfield Campus and Ms. Lori Worth, Eighth Grade Transition Coordinator, plus over 80 volunteer counselors for their work. The conferences were well attended and received by families with many positive comments by counselors.

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

- The Winnetka campus has also celebrated Black History Month. Mrs. Dubravec thanked the Art Department for the project that they did that can be viewed in the Concourse. The project was comprised of two monumental-scale portraits of contemporary American artists. The portraits are made of 4"x4" squares and each was created by a different art student from a variety of classes such as Drawing and Painting, Glass Art, Ceramics, Photography, Graphics and Design, Art Essentials, and Art Explorations. Students have also been making morning announcements to celebrate Black History Month.

- There are 33 National Merit finalists (35 semifinalists). Students will begin to find out in March and April the kinds of scholarships that they will receive.
- The Chess Team placed second in the state, which is their best finish since 2005.
- WYSE/ACES competed at Oakton Community College Regional competition and took second place.
- Ms. Maggie Shea, class of 2007, has qualified for the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. She was part of New Trier's early sailing group. Ms. Shea will sail in the 49erFx class, a two person, high performance "skiff". Her father shared this with Mrs. Dubravec and he wanted to thank her teachers and coaches for their encouragement and support.
- Kinesis also took place last week and was a wonderful display of talent with chorography, lighting, music and dance.

Dr. Tim Hayes, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, noted that there is information on New Trier's website entitled, "Take Care of Yourself During Winter Cold and Flu Season," which offers helpful tips to stay healthy during this time.

Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, shared two updates. The first was regarding Institute Day on Friday, February 14th entitled NT 2030: Becoming and Connecting. The focus of the day was to continue to make individual and departmental professional connections to Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Equity and the Characteristics of a New Trier Graduate. Dr. Hayes and Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education, presented SEL work to Physical Plant Services (PPS) staff early that morning. The day then began in the Gaffney Auditorium with Dr. Paul Sally, Superintendent, giving opening remarks about the Strategic Plan, its status along with staff responses from a survey. Dr. Sally called on faculty and staff to stay engaged as the District looks ahead. Mr. Tragos then presented on the committee's work for the Characteristics of a New Trier Graduate. He will share further information on this topic at the April Board of Education meeting. Following that, interdisciplinary groups met to discuss the characteristics previously discussed during Mr. Tragos' presentation, which provided constructive feedback for the committee's continued work. Departments then gathered to continue their respective work on SEL and Equity. The day concluded with faculty meeting in their Professional Learning Cohorts.

Mr. Tragos then went on to share about the Illinois Science Assessment (ISA). He noted that in August, he shared an update with the Board about the science assessment, that was essentially a biology test, that took place during one double-lab period for biology students. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) changed the format to three sections that will be administered over three days. It will be administered to all eleventh graders, including those who previously took the test their Freshman year as biology students. The test will take place March 2nd through March 5th during a student's science class on the iPad. Mr. Tragos thanked Dr. Chimille Dillard, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, along with Mr. Jason English, Science Department Chair, for their work on planning the logistics for about a thousand students. They have also managed to preserve as much instructional time as possible given that the State may take up to 200 minutes of instructional time for the test. The District believes that it has been able to capture every minute of instructional time while still meeting the requirements of the test. Communication has been delivered to teachers and parents on a number of occasions. Although the District is ready for the test, the State has yet to deliver proctor manuals, coordinator manuals, or testing log-ins. The technical specs were received just last week, which has led to much work being done to ensure that 200 iPads are updated and ready. The school is prepared, but this brief report offers insight at the State level.

FOIA Report

Mr. Chris Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, noted that there were six FOIA requests received since the last Board of Education Regular Meeting. All have been closed. They pertained to staff retirements, web filtering devices, course offerings in world languages, seclusion and restraint and finally a request from a student for security camera footage from one of the gyms. Mr. Johnson went on to explain that the student had made a full court shot in basketball and wanted to prove it to his friends. While the footage was not disclosed as part of the FOIA, administrators did let him watch it. It was confirmed that he did, in fact, make the shot.

Mr. Johnson then took a moment to introduce the new Chief Technology Officer, Dr. Michael Marassa. Later in the meeting, the Board will be asked to approve his contract which will begin on May 18th. The position is available due to a resignation last summer. The District is pleased to welcome him, most recently from Grayslake School District 127, where he led the technology department for a number of years. He also previously worked in the Champaign

Unit 4 schools in technology roles as well as a middle school teacher and instructional coach. Dr. Marassa went through an extensive interview process, which Mr. Johnson shared.

Mr. Marassa shared a few comments including that he is excited to work with Dr. Sally and his team along with the principals and their teams. He thanked everyone for the opportunity.

Mr. Johnson went on to thank Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources, for her coordination and partnership in this process. Ms. Albrecht then welcomed Mr. Marassa.

C. New Trier 2030 – 2019-2020 Annual Plan: Social Emotional Learning

Dr. Sally began with a brief introduction noting that there will be several formal presentations on the work that has been done, the progress that has been made, and the next steps in regards to the Annual Plan. Presentations will take place this month as well as March and April. Then in April and May, presentations will focus on what the 2020-2021 school year will look like for the Strategic Plan. Each month there will be a major presentation as well as minor presentations.

Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education, then presented on Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Dr. Panopoulos began with a brief overview noting that this fell under the framework of Student Personal Growth, Engagement and Well-being. She went on to acknowledge the committee members, three of whom were in attendance, Ms. Jen Karakosta, Applied Arts Faculty, Ms. Hannah Hsieh, Science Department Faculty and Dr. Tim Hayes, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services. The committee has a nice representation of the various departments within the school. It was important to include active participants and assorted perspectives since the work centered around developing adult competencies, particularly through professional development. She shared the committee's core belief, their 2019-2020 goal, the reasoning for beginning with the adults first and the definition of SEL. Much of the work that the committee has done has revolved around the New Trier's partnership with CASEL (the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning). Dr. Panopoulos shared information on CASEL and what they offer to schools in terms social emotional learning by way of research, resources as well as informing policy. She then described the CASEL Framework of SEL Competencies graphic. She went on to share why SEL is important for students as well as for the adults at New Trier. The professional development plan that was implemented for this school year was shared, with the focus being on building adult competencies. Aside from the larger moments such as Institute Days, the committee representatives are doing a lot of work as liaisons to their departments around this work. A sample of a professional development activity, which was a self-assessment, was also shared.

This summer, there will be CASEL Township Training which will allow for SEL work across the Township. Attendees will include staff from New Trier, the sender schools and NSSSED, so there is a connection from early childhood all the way through high school. This work will lead up to a Township-wide Institute Day in February 2021.

Finally, Dr. Panopoulos shared next steps for the 2020-2021 school year and the focus will be to begin to integrate SEL into daily instruction, with an emphasis on curriculum, instruction, classroom climate, among other items. All of these goals will be actionable, concrete and measurable with assessment taking place in order to goal set for the 2021-2022 school year. The teaching of SEL skills can be thought of in four different approaches, as not just one approach is going to work in every setting. Social emotional learning not only happens in the classroom, but also in the hallways, in the school's performance areas, on the athletic fields and to an extent, at home. The committee will also extend communications to New Trier families so they are aware of the work being done.

Dr. Sally then invited Dr. Hayes to add any comments. Dr. Hayes noted that it has been a pleasure to work on this Strategic Planning initiative, how important this work is and the passion that each committee member brings. The feedback from staff and faculty has been overwhelmingly positive.

Dr. Sally noted the research links that Dr. Panopoulos displayed, stating that they would be shared on the website. It is clear that these skills need to be worked on for adults and students in order for this to be the climate where students can really learn. This can be a difficult area for teenagers, but the District feels it has a supportive environment to continue this work with them.

Ms. Hahn inquired if the athletic department and performing arts department are part of this work, to which Dr. Panopoulos noted that there are representatives from these areas on the committee. She added that Physical Plant

Services (PPS) staff have also been involved with this work and the District has made sure that it is including all departments are represented.

Dr. Glucksman inquired if Dr. Panopoulos reviewed the data from the self-assessment tool given in the fall, if there were any surprises from it and if that data drove any part of February's Institute Day. Dr. Panopoulos noted that it was important to the committee that the self-assessment remain private. The committee did want to gather some sort of data, so they asked those who completed the survey, to indicate what would be further areas of development. Self-management and self-awareness were two of those areas, so many of the sessions at the November Institute Day centered around that. He then inquired if people will take the self-assessment again at the end of the year. Dr. Panopoulos said that was her recommendation, but that the committee has not set that up as of now, though it could be part of the goals that departments build for themselves. She noted it is a great tool to come back to for personal reflection. Dr. Glucksman thanked all those involved as it is important and is a thread throughout a student's academic career.

Mr. Dronen inquired if the Township Training only involved school districts or if it will involve parent groups too. Dr. Sally answered that it will only involve school districts, and there are about 60 staff members from the sender schools and New Trier who will participate with the goal being to build a K-12 curriculum. He noted that while there is good articulation in many subject areas, better articulation is needed in SEL and Equity. He went on to say that all township schools have adopted the CASEL framework and for teachers, staff and the community, it is a well-accepted one. Many of those involved in this group will go on to develop the Township February 2021 Institute Day. The idea of extending it to parents will need to be further discussed.

Mr. McLane inquired what a 2023 senior might look like versus a 2020 one as a 2023 graduate will have the benefit of two to three years of this program. Dr. Panopoulos shared that a 2023 graduate would have more awareness of social emotional skills and how to categorize various competencies in general. Along with that, they would understand self-management of their emotions and would know how those emotions impact others. She added that one piece that could look different is how SEL practices connect with current practices in the classroom. Mr. McLane then inquired how that will be measured. Dr. Sally responded that there are a couple of pieces that the committee has started to discuss. One of these is self-awareness, with Dr. Sally noting that the self-assessment tool is good as it breaks this down to some very specific skills that a person can work on. As this is drilled down to departments, they will begin to work on what this looks like in their classrooms. The other piece, while likely to happen, but details are not yet finalized, is to pilot a Social Emotional Skills Screener for students. While there are screeners out there, the District does not know what one might look like for New Trier, but it worth reviewing a tool that asks students questions, teachers can weigh in about it and hear about students that are in their class. If the pilot goes well, the school will have measurable data and might see students moving along this self-awareness continuum.

Mr. Robitaille noted that it is hard to overstate the importance of this work and senses that it is more conceptual versus real at this point and the path from specific goals to measurable outcomes is to be determined. He explained that his understanding is that the concepts will be pushed down to the departments' level, and from there, each department will come up with their own version of goals and outcomes. He inquired if, with many versions of this from departments, does the District risk diluting the ultimate impact on students. Dr. Panopoulos responded that it would be important for the committee to identify the "must-haves" for the departments so they know what their targets are and then based on their needs, they can adapt and set their goals. The state of Illinois has standards for SEL, but the committee has not discussed them yet as they have been focusing on broader pieces. They standards do break down into indicators, and the committee would review those and determine how they fit into the work being done at New Trier. Once that conversation occurs, it is possible, from there, that the school could identify how to measure those specific standards and indicators.

Dr. Sally added the committee includes representatives from all departments, which is important since this work only occurs when it happens in the classroom between teachers and students. Committee members will bring back what their respective departments are doing and realign with each other as needed. He shared additional thoughts as well. Mr. Robitaille then inquired the next time the District would report back on progress. Dr. Sally noted that will happen as the plans for 20-21 are flushed out. Dr. Panopoulos added more information about the measurement piece, noting that CASEL has a Collaborating Districts Initiative which works with schools to collect information about their SEL work and is then published on their website for use. It is a difficult area to measure as it is a soft skill, so the idea would be to determine what the school wants students to learn and work backwards to determine measurement.

Ms. Ducommun commented that having articulation with the township and by having common language and conversations on how to best implement these skills, will go a long way for students as they work their way through the system. When reflecting on her own children, she noted that they use this language a lot and believe they received a healthy dose of that while at New Trier. In terms of addressing the concerns of bullying, she also noted that these kind of self-awareness skills as well as how one works together with others would hopefully advance the cause of reducing bullying. She did add her concern about screening students for SEL skills as the District has needed to add fifths to social work for student support and if this screening identifies students who might need additional work then the District may need to obtain resources for them noting that it is a never-ending quest to address students' needs. Dr. Sally replied that the school does a lot of identification through teachers, social workers, and coaches and this would add to the multiple measures the District already has to assist in assessing where a student is and what support they need, but understood her concern. Dr. Hayes added that there is a lot of overlap between the mental health work that the school is doing and social emotional skills development. The tools used to measure social emotional skill development are not going to be assessments of one's mental health as they do different things in different ways. While self-management and self-awareness are skills that are needed to be mentally healthy, they do not necessarily indicate that a person is struggling with mental health if they need to develop in those areas. Dr. Panopoulos shared additional thoughts.

Ms. Albrecht shared that she liked how the report was built around building blocks as well as the committee structure which includes faculty and staff from all areas of the school. She also appreciated bringing in the elementary schools for consistency and assumes it will take a number of years to get everyone on the same page, so change over time should be anticipated instead of monumental change. Dr. Sally noted that it is not expected that the sender schools will be lock-step in any of these areas, but a standard is set at New Trier for expectations of incoming students, and each sender school will approach this in their own unique way. Ms. Albrecht's main concern is that students are also prepared for a world that may not be as sensitive to them as the school has been and that they are ready for those challenges with resilience, which Dr. Sally agreed with. She also liked that universities are doing some of this work and thanked Dr. Panopoulos for the report.

D. New Trier 2030 – 2019-2020 Annual Plan: Connecting with Families of Younger Children, Financial Communication, and Leadership

The next presentation included three smaller ones by a several administrators. First, Mrs. Dubravec and Mr. Waechtler presented on Leadership. Their committee was made up of fifteen members and included administration, a Board member, faculty, staff, students and parents. The committee determined core values and goals based on the framework, Leadership Throughout the School. For the 2019-2020 Annual Plan, the goal of Leadership Development was the focus for the year. The committee wanted to ensure that its work impacted staff, students and the school, and Mr. Waechtler shared leadership opportunities in each of those areas. For this first year, the committee wanted to identify and develop adult leaders throughout the institution. Currently, there is an aspiring leadership cohort that focuses on key dispositions and competencies of effective leaders. Last year, a Characteristics of Professional Practice for Leaders was developed and that document plays a large role in the cohort. There are eleven faculty members from seven departments with a range of years of experience who are participating. Finally, various articles and videos, along with a case study, are used during the cohort meeting time. For instance, on the topic of difficult conversations, participants may role play those in order to foster better skills in this particular area. Dr. Sally commented that the articles from The Harvard Business Review are very applicable to the work of the school.

Next, Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications, presented on Connecting with Families of Younger Children which falls under the Community Engagement, Partnerships and Governance framework. The goal for the Annual Plan was to connect with those families who have not had a student go through New Trier and may have many questions and concerns. Ms. Dizon shared how the committee came to be, noting that it had already been a standing committee for many years, the Community Engagement Committee, which has had two Board members sit on it. It was expanded to include students, members from the New Trier Educational Foundation and New Trier Extension, alumni and community members. Ms. Dizon highlighted the goals for the whole Strategic Plan, which the Community Engagement Committee is overseeing the work on. From that group, a subcommittee was created, Younger Families, to work specifically on the Annual Plan's year one goal. She went on to explain how the goal was selected, noting that two students shared about their experiences as New Trier students. Both are seniors, but were juniors when they first began this work. They noted that when they entered eighth grade at their respective sender schools, they were fearful of attending New Trier due to myths they had heard about levels, test

scores and making friends. Once at New Trier, they both have had wonderful experiences. It was then decided that the committee wanted to address the myths that are out there about the school and ease the transition to high school while also engaging families prior to their student's eighth grade year.

From this, a new publication was created entitled, "Getting to Know New Trier." It will be given to all eighth graders. The committee also cataloged existing opportunities for younger students and will determine where else they could get involved. Ms. Dizon then went into further detail about the brochure such as focusing on the student experience, appealing to parents and students, answer frequently asked questions as well as ease concerns about transitioning to New Trier. The publication was piloted in a large packet that was given to families during Academic Life Night in January. Moving forward, it will be the first official communication to incoming families. Next steps include analyzing information regarding existing opportunities for younger students and their families as well as suggesting and implementing new opportunities. One such opportunity is the new debate camp this summer for middle school students. Feedback from incoming students and their families, along with feedback from the Parent/Community Advisory Group, will also be incorporated into the brochure prior to it being sent out next year.

Mr. Robitaille inquired if the brochure was on the website, which Ms. Dizon confirmed.

The final presentation was given by Mr. Johnson on Communication of Financial Information. This item was part of the Finance, Facilities and Human Resources framework. He went on to thank the Finance Committee, particularly, Ms. Albrecht, Ms. Ducommun and Mr. Robitaille, as well as, the subcommittee that was established to review information that could be used in financial communications. Mr. Johnson noted that it was interesting to determine how to present this information. While the District is transparent with its financial reports, there is so much information that it may be hard to draw conclusions for those who do not spend a lot of time in school finance. The committee concluded that providing updates two times a year made the most sense – the first being with the annual report, which provides results of the previous fiscal year and what was achieved with the budget. The second time for an update would be in the fall when the budget is adopted and will outline what the District plans to accomplish with those funds in supporting its students. The committee also wanted to directly tie the District's finances to opportunities for students in and out of the classroom.

The outcome was the report of how the District supported its students in the previous year with the 2019 Annual Report, which will be sent out to the community later this month. This report focuses on connecting dollars to supporting our students, the top five budget takeaways, as well as how New Trier fits into a person's property tax dollars on a community-wide basis. Where the funds come from and where the dollars are spent are also included. Finally, a section was included on the challenges the District faces. While things are going well for the District, it still faces certain challenges such as legislative changes related to funding and meeting the needs of students, among others. Next steps include incorporating this report and making it accessible in other areas such as the school's website or presentations with various parent and community groups. During the summer, work will be done on the other publication that will be tied to the adoption of the budget, such as the goals for the Strategic Plan, the school, students and how the District's dollars support that for the year. Mr. Johnson then invited any questions or comments from the Board.

Ms. Ducommun noted that she loves not only this brochure, but the one that Niki discussed as well and thanked Mr. Johnson for his effort.

Mr. McLane, a member of the Community Engagement Committee, along with Ms. Hahn, commented that Ms. Dizon did a great job in terms of drawing an eclectic group together. She moves work forward, listens, adapts and changes items as necessary, while reviewing items quickly. He looks forward to the iterative process as it evolves, noting it was very well done.

Ms. Hahn commented that as part of the younger students' initiative, the pilot program was expanded for registering eighth graders. Since this was the first year of the program's expansion, she inquired if it had changed based on what was learned during the pilot program and if there is a sense of the percentage of students taking advantage of this and if it is being well-received. Mr. Waechter responded that there has been about 80% participation at each of the sender schools, but far less with the private schools as those people had to come to New Trier. The program has been very well received. He noted that one improvement that could be made was further training for the counselors in terms of moving the conversations along and wrapping up when necessary. Ms. Hahn then thanked Mr. Johnson and the Finance Committee for tying the information back to the investments

being made in students. The community is generally happy to support New Trier and is an institution that everyone is proud of, the community pays high taxes and is happy to do so, but to tie it back to what it means for students instead of noting class size or per pupil spending, is meaningful and impactful.

Mr. Dronen inquired how those who do not have students at New Trier, about 80% of the community, are receiving this information as well as if the District is being proactive about this. Mr. Johnson noted that the Annual Report will go to all households in the community. For the document that will be produced in the fall, it will be determined who will receive it and the means by which they receive it.

Ms. Albrecht noted that each Board member had a copy of the Annual Report and confirmed with Ms. Dizon that it was being mailed shortly.

Ms. Ducommun then inquired if it was being sent bulk mail, to which Ms. Dizon shared details about that. Ms. Dizon also confirmed for Ms. Ducommun that this mailing does get sorted because it is addressed. Ms. Dizon noted the good relationship the District's printer has with the local post offices and usually the mailing goes out pretty quickly.

Ms. Albrecht also noted how she loved the QR codes that could be scanned for additional information in the Annual Report. Ms. Albrecht also sat on the initial Strategic Planning Committee pertaining to younger children and the elementary schools. She noted how the students on the committee played an instrumental role in what the initiative would be. She went on to share additional comments and thanked Ms. Dizon for increasing students and families comfort level in regards to transitioning to New Trier.

Ms. Ducommun noted that some students and families may be disappointed that they did not attend the counseling sessions for incoming freshmen as only 80% of the families took advantage of the offer. Mr. Waechter noted that, anecdotally, those who did not attend was due to this being their third or fourth child attending New Trier and they did not need assistance in selecting courses. Many did attend "All About the Electives" so a student could see their choices.

VII. Administrative Items

A. Treasurer's Report for January 2020

Mr. Johnson presented the January 2020 Treasurer's Report, noting that assets totaled \$93,450,756. January cash balances are typically at the lowest point for the fiscal year as shown on the cash flow graph, but the District is at the highest "low" point in the last five years. There was good revenue collection in the fall and the District is at a good place even though it is its low month. The weighted portfolio yield is 1.94% for PMA and 2.35% for 5/3. These are decreasing slightly as interest rates go down. Receipts totaled \$870,000 for the month, and were evenly split between local, state and federal revenues, the District continues to see timely state payments and is getting more caught up on federal ones.

B. Financial Reports for January 2020

Mr. Johnson reviewed the Financial Reports for January 2020. Operating revenue was \$54,937,804 for the first seven months of the fiscal year, or 2.62% higher compared to last year. Revenue has been received as expected across all categories. The adopted budget has a 2.26% increase in operating revenue for the year. Operating expenditures were \$51,362,114 through January. Exclusive of interfund transfers, the operating expenses were 3.62% higher than last year and the District will carefully monitor expenditures for the last five months of the fiscal year to ensure it is meeting its budget. There are some timing issues as to when invoices arrived, particularly with capital, among other things.

***C. Scholarship Trust Fund Allocation Approval**

Mr. Myron Spiwak, Director of Business Services, presented the Scholarship Trust Fund Allocation. He noted that this trust fund is in its 71st year and is going stronger than ever. The funds are held by Vanguard Investments and a local investment professional, Mr. Richard Drake, manages the portfolio for the District at no cost. Mr. Spiwak noted that the District is grateful for his advice and management. He also recommends which fund the scholarship funds should be taken out of. Total assets are at \$4,041,152 as of December 31, 2019 and are the highest they have ever been. The funds are spread out amongst six different funds and are allocated in the balance that fall within the guidelines that were adopted by the Board. The District did withdraw \$85,000 in June 2019 to cover some of the scholarships that were awarded last spring. As a reminder, the District does not withdraw the full amount of scholarships awarded. Funds are also taken from an account at the bank where individual donations are held. The

increase for the year ending December 31, 2019 was \$836,805 and after accounting for the withdrawal, the actual return was 25.6% across all funds, which is very robust. The benchmark that is used to compare funds is the Vanguard Balanced Index Fund, which had gains of 21.8% for 2019. The five-year average return is 8.8% compared to the benchmark of 8.1%. Funds were down in 2018 and ran a little behind the benchmark in both cases, so it was a good bounce back year for the fund. The Board of Education approves a maximum allocation amount and is based on the trailing average method. This method takes 6% of the average total assets for the past four years as a way to minimize the market effect on any given graduating class. The scholarship committee does not max out the full amount allocated, but rather holds funds back. The increase over last year was \$25,898, bringing the recommended maximum allotment to \$203,665 for the Board to approve for the graduating class of 2020. Mr. Spiwak then asked for any questions or comments.

Mr. Dronen noted that Mr. Drake has done a nice job. He recommended an increase to the amount allocated towards cash so in case of a market down-turn there is cash on hand, so one is not selling if a bond fund or equity fund is down. He also suggested looking at that at a four to six percent range, to which Mr. Spiwak stated that he would pass that along to Mr. Drake.

Mr. McLane inquired, that with the maximum allocation, why the full amount is not disbursed. To which Mr. Spiwak replied that Ms. Ducommun asked the same during the Finance Committee meeting. He went on to note that both he and Mr. Johnson would speak with the scholarship committee. Mr. Johnson added, in talking with Mr. Spiwak and Dr. Sally, that it was the year to increase some allocations though many of the scholarships are in a flat dollar amount. He thought it was time that some scholarships could increase, for example a \$2500 one to \$3000. These increases will be phased in this year as well as next year. This will begin to close the gap between what is allocated and what is disbursed. Mr. Johnson went on to share the three different types of categories for scholarships – the trust fund, student clubs and community organizations, the latter of which are both pass-throughs. Mr. Johnson also noted that the Finance Committee will receive more information on the process that the scholarship committee uses, noting they especially focus on those students who would benefit from the needs-based scholarships.

Mr. Robitaille inquired if these are actual returns versus giving effect to inflows and outflows of money, to which Mr. Spiwak confirmed they were actual returns. Mr. Robitaille also noted that there was a relatively big estate gift, which Mr. Spiwak confirmed occurred two years ago.

Ms. Ducommun suggested in regards to Mr. Dronen's comments that the Finance Committee discuss this recommendation prior to speaking with Mr. Drake.

Mr. Robitaille asked that Mr. Drake be thanked for all his work on behalf of the District. Mr. Johnson went on to provide some historical information as well.

Mr. Robitaille moved, and Dr. Glucksman seconded, the motion to approve a maximum allocation of \$203,665 for scholarships for the 2020 graduation class. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. McLane, Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Ducommun, Dr. Glucksman, Ms. Hahn, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- Bill List for the Period, January 1 – 31, 2020
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Administrator's Contract – Chief Technology Officer, Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements and Stipends)
- The approval of student fees for the 2020-2021 school year
- Board of Education Meeting Calendar: 2020-2021
- 15 Year Facilities Plan Year 1 Projects: Bid Package 1 Approval

Two items were pulled from the Consent Agenda for further discussion. Mr. Robitaille pulled the 15 Year Facilities Plan Year 1 Projects: Bid Package 1 Approval, while Mr. Dronen pulled the approval of student fees for the 2020-2021 school year.

Mr. Robitaille moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes the Bill List for Period, January 1 – 31, 2020; Personnel Report (Appointments, Administrator’s Contract – Chief Technology Officer, Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements and Stipends) and the Board of Education Meeting Calendar: 2020-2021. Dr. Glucksman seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Ducommun, Dr. Glucksman, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

Mr. Dronen suggested, moving forward, that it would be nice to itemize what each fee generates, such as the general fee, the activity fee, the parking fee, and come up with a total. He then inquired the amount that student parking has generated this fiscal year. Ms. Ducommun noted it is less than what the District is charged. Mr. Johnson noted that he would provide more information in a weekly letter, but this is really a pass-through. The District has 150 student parking spaces and there is an agreement with the Village of Winnetka that escalates five percent compounding every year. In terms of the number of spaces, the school sells 100% of them every year. Mr. Johnson would like to think about discussing the contract with the Village as it was signed at a time when there was four and five percent inflation and there is certainly much less now, so the compounding effect of that is tough for the District. Finally, Mr. Dronen commented that gradually he would like to see no increases on the general fee, so it phases out over time. He does recognize that it generates about \$500,000 a year, to which Mr. Johnson noted that between the general fee and activity fee, about \$700,000 a year is generated. Mr. Dronen noted that he is only speaking specifically about the general fee and since it is tied to the curriculum and this is public education, he inquired if it parents should be charged this fee. He does not encourage getting rid of it, but if the District were to not increase the fee over a period of five, ten or fifteen years, it would gradually be phased out.

Mr. Robitaille moved that the Board of Education approve the student fees for the 2020-2021 school year, as presented. Dr. Glucksman seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Ducommun, Dr. Glucksman, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

Mr. Robitaille asked for the 15 Year Facilities Plan Year 1 Projects: Bid Package 1 Approval to be pulled as the approval is a large number and it should be discussed. Ms. Albrecht noted that it is a good number compared to the estimate; Mr. Robitaille concurred. Mr. Johnson then provided an overview on the renovation plans, noting they have been going well under Mr. Dave Conway’s, Director of Physical Plant Services, leadership as well as under architect’s Mr. Steve Cashman and Pepper Construction’s oversight. The package is bid in two packages, the first package contains those items that come first in the process or require long lead times, that represents about a quarter or a third of the work. For the second package, the pre-bid meeting was today and those bids will be ready in fourteen days, so those will be ready to talk about at the next Finance Committee meeting as well as the Board Meeting. At that point, the District will be able to discuss how the largest element of the project, the actual construction costs are comparing to the budget. While this is important as it is a large dollar expenditure, it is too early to talk about how it factors into the overall project, so there will be more analysis when the District does the second bid package. Mr. Johnson confirmed with Mr. Conway that they only anticipate two bid packages. Mr. Johnson noted that the District is pleased that there was good coverage from bidders as Mr. Conway, the architect and the construction manager worked to make sure they shared with the contractors that the bid packages were coming. This allowed the contractors to bid and make sure they have the capacity to do the work. The second item the District was pleased about was the pricing. All the low bids in this package checked out and reference checks also went well.

Mr. Robitaille inquired if contingency has been included. Mr. Conway noted that ten percent contingency is in the bid package as a separate number. Mr. Johnson went on to explain that the contingency is a separate number on the project and at the next Board Meeting, he will share the actual bids as well as the architectural fees are, the contingency and where the numbers are at in terms of the overall budget. Mr. Robitaille wanted to confirm that the comparison estimate is also before contingency, which Mr. Johnson confirmed.

Dr. Glucksman inquired how many of the bids that came in were from companies the District has not seen before, to which Mr. Conway replied none. Dr. Glucksman then noted that the good thing is the District's familiarity with these bidders, to which Mr. Conway agreed. Discussion then continued between Mr. Conway and Mr. Robitaille on this topic. Mr. Johnson shared additional comments as well including that many of these good bids are a testament to the good management of Mr. Conway and the Physical Plant Services (PPS) department. PPS staff is able to offer certain benefits such as hooking up electricity that the bidder may not get at another job, and in turn, they offer competitive bids and PPS staff is able to learn from them as well.

Ms. Albrecht noted that the original bid package included the stairwell renovations, but are now excluded from this current bid package. Mr. Johnson explained that there is a portion in each bid package, which are bid as alternates. He went on to explain the reasoning behind that decision noting that stairwells are expensive and there is some variability to when they are completed, therefore the information will be reviewed to where the District is in the budget after the second bid package, cumulatively, and then determine an answer as to how many stairwells will be worked on. Ms. Albrecht agreed with this plan. Discussion took place between Mr. Johnson and Mr. Conway confirming that the work was being done on the east side of the Tower building on the third floor, then going north. Ms. Albrecht confirmed that the full stairwell would be redone, to which Mr. Johnson confirmed that the entire stairwell would be replaced from basement to fourth floor.

Mr. Robitaille moved that the Board of Education award prime trade contract for the 2020 Renovations Project to those contractors recommended by Pepper Construction totaling \$2,858,294. Dr. Glucksman seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Dronen, Ms. Ducommun, Dr. Glucksman, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Mr. Robitaille, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

IX. Board Member Reports

Mr. McLane reported about the **Facilities Steering Committee**, noting that the committee discussed the work for this summer as well as looked ahead to 2021 work and the 15-year plan for the east side of the Winnetka campus. He noted the Committee of the Whole meeting in April, which will be illuminating for all.

Mr. McLane and Ms. Hahn attended the **Community Engagement Committee** meeting that led to the report this evening.

Mr. Robitaille reported that the agenda from the **Finance Committee** meeting was already covered this evening. One item that will be at a future meeting is capital planning around both around the 15-year plan and the potential of a Gates east side project. The committee is grinding away at the resources of the District to fund that kind of project. Ms. Liz Hennessey, from Raymond James, has been enlisted to assist the committee in this work.

Ms. Ducommun noted that the **New Trier Fine Arts Association (NTFAA)** is hosting a graduation raffle. Then on Saturday, May 2nd, there will be the New Trier Arts Festival, from 12:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. It will include students from third grade through high school in visual arts, orchestra, jazz, among others to highlight what is done in these areas. On Tuesday, March 10th, NTFAA is hosting an Arts in College Night. This will allow students an opportunity to learn how they might incorporate the arts into their college planning.

On February 12th, the **Strategic Plan Advisory Group**, formally named All School Forum, met to discuss stress, its causes and how to deal with it, which was led by Mrs. Dubravec. This group is driven by the students who are engaged and insightful and provide the rest of the group a lot to think about. This tied in well with what the Board heard this evening about Social Emotional Learning and the Strategic Plan. Self-awareness will increase over time and resilience and the ability to identify and deal with it, is something that is very important.

Ms. Hahn attended the **Booster Club** meeting on February 11th. Mr. Augie Fontanetta, Director of Athletics, went through the coaches wish list for their annual contribution. Mr. Fontanetta prioritized the requests from the Kinetic Wellness Department and the Athletics Department. He will work with the Booster Club to allocate the resources. The Booster Club will also determine how much money to hold back for a larger ticket item if they are so inclined. Finally, the Booster Club is preparing for their main fundraising event, the Booster Bash, on April 3rd at Michigan

Shores Country Club, which is open to the entire school community.

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

Calendar of Events: Dr. Sally highlighted the following dates:

- On Saturday, February 22nd is Trevapalooza.
- On Tuesday, February 25th is the District ACT for juniors. The sophomores will have Career Day, the freshmen will have a regular school day and seniors will have the day off.
- Jesus Christ Superstar will run from March 5th through March 8th and tickets can be purchased online.
- The Frosh/Soph Play, Cheerleaders vs. Aliens will also take place.
- The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for March 16th.

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

XI. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

Cathleen Albrecht, President