

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
May 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 virtually via Zoom on Monday, May 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**

Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; other administrators, faculty and staff, Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary; members of the press and community.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER – 6:00 p.m. – Zoom**

Ms. Albrecht called the Regular Meeting of May 18, 2020 of the Board of Education to order at 6:03 p.m. via Zoom. Roll call was taken and all members were present, except for Ms. Ducommun and Mr. Robitaille. Ms. Albrecht asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Dr. Glucksman 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 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. Ms. Hahn seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

ABSENT: Ms. Ducommun, Mr. Robitaille

The motion passed.

**II. CLOSED SESSION – 6:00 p.m. – Zoom**

**III. BUSINESS MEETING**

**Open Session – 7:00 p.m. – C234**

Ms. Albrecht called the Regular Meeting of May 18, 2020 of the Board of Education to order at 7:05 p.m., virtually, via Zoom. Roll call was taken and all members were present.

**IV. Minutes**

Ms. Albrecht asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 20, 2020 (open session). There were a few requests from Ms. Hahn and Ms. Ducommun for changes, which were incorporated. Ms. Hahn moved, and Dr. Glucksman seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 20, 2020 (open 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 explained that, due to the remote Board meeting, public comments were needed to have been submitted to the Board of Education secretary by 5:00 p.m. Commenters were instructed to write their comments in accordance with Board Policy 2-230 Public Participation at Board Meetings, including ensuring a 3-minute time limit when read. There were three public comments submitted and Ms. Ruston read them.

During public comment, it was noted that some people may be having difficulty locating the link for the Board meeting. Ms. Dizon will remind Mr. Boris Spektor, Web Developer, to include the Zoom link in the Board meeting calendar item on New Trier's website. Ms. Ruston will also ensure that Mr. Spektor receives the link.

Ms. Albrecht thanked those who sent in their comments.

## **VI. Special Orders of Business**

### **A. FOIA Report**

Mr. Johnson gave the FOIA report noting that there was one request related to staffing since the last Board meeting, which has been closed.

### **B. Report on End-of-Year Planning and Fall Reopening Committees**

Dr. Sally began the presentation on the End-of-Year Planning and Fall Reopening Committees. Work continues on this since it was last discussed at the April Board Meeting and progress has been made in a number of areas. Discussions have been good and occurred with a representative group to figure out a number of different details. Each administrator will share about their respective committee. This is not comprehensive of all the work that is taking place, but represents some of the more important work that is currently happening. Dr. Sally then turned the presentation over to Mrs. Dubravec to discuss the graduation plan.

Before Mrs. Dubravec shared the plan, she noted that the school has had several wonderful conversations and webinars with Dr. Lisa Lamour. Dr. Lamour did a webinar for parents. There were 1,800 parents registered and 1,300 attended virtually. She also did a webinar this morning for ninth, tenth and eleventh graders on how to manage through the pandemic. She then did a webinar for staff at this afternoon's staff meeting to provide insight and perspective on productively managing emotions and feelings during the pandemic. This is one of the ways that New Trier is supporting its students, families and staff.

Mrs. Dubravec then went on to share the plan for graduation. Mr. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, along with Mrs. Dubravec had a call with the Sears Centre where graduation was scheduled to take place. They discussed the probability of using it for commencement and it is not doable. She shared additional details, noting that the contract has been cancelled with the Sears Centre. Mrs. Dubravec noted that July 12<sup>th</sup> was another date for a celebration whether that included the Sears Centre or not, in light of the recent developments, the District would like to keep their commitment to families to bring seniors together for that date if possible. However, the District also wants to do something on May 31<sup>st</sup>, the original date for commencement, to honor that day. Mrs. Dubravec has been working with the New Trier Parents Association (NTPA) to discuss ideas. The weekend of May 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, advisers will deliver yard signs to seniors. At that time, there will be an opportunity to take a social distance selfie. The NTPA will also assist in decorating for May 31<sup>st</sup>.

Since the District has already committed to doing a virtual ceremony due to the uncertainty of July 12<sup>th</sup>, it was decided to move forward with one on May 31<sup>st</sup> from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. Beginning at 2:00 p.m., graduates would be able to Walk the Stage on Trevian Way while families looked on from their vehicles. Mrs. Dubravec shared this idea with the Winnetka Police Department, who in turn, shared it with the Village of Winnetka, all of who are in support of this plan. The police department and the Physical Plant Services (PPS) staff will assist with traffic. There will be multiple stages and the photography company will also be present to take pictures. While graduates may not be in their typical white tuxedos and dresses, they are encouraged to wear something nice. A gathering on July 12<sup>th</sup> will depend on state guidelines. Mrs. Dubravec sent out a tribute video today to senior and their families. Dr. Sally added comments acknowledging that this is a difficult time for families. There was hope that July 12<sup>th</sup> at the Sears Centre would happen, but that is no longer the case. It is not even clear if on July 12<sup>th</sup>, the school could do any significant gathering as the state guidelines for phase 3 note that gatherings may be of only ten people or less and in phase 4, gatherings of fifty people or less can occur.

The Illinois School Board of Education (ISBE) has provided guidelines for graduation and the type of drive-up celebration New Trier envisions is allowed. Walk the Stage on Trevian Way will allow graduates an experience and

bring closure to their time at New Trier. Administration was concerned, that with the July 12<sup>th</sup> date, students and families may not be available for a celebration. The District has been working through plans as quickly and thoughtfully as they can, as well as, collaborating with area high schools to listen to their plans, which are similar to New Trier's. Mrs. Dubravec thanked the many staff who have helped think through ways to celebrate. May 31<sup>st</sup> will offer one way for seniors to celebrate immediately while they are still around.

Mr. Robitaille inquired what Walk the Stage will really look like, to which Mrs. Dubravec replied, noting that it will be a smaller rendition of the Sears Centre and will include multiple stages along Trevian Way. Dr. Sally added that ISBE is allowing this drive-up celebration and short walk so that graduates can have the experience of receiving their diploma and celebrating. Mr. Robitaille then inquired if administrators have thought about the length of this, to which Dr. Sally replied he believes the plan that has been created, with families organized in alphabetical order and arriving at their designated time, the school will be able to get them through in 30-60 minutes. Mr. Robitaille shared a personal anecdote and then inquired if the school was moving too fast to make this happen on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Mrs. Dubravec responded that the probability of July 12<sup>th</sup> was getting slimmer and slimmer, and having this celebration on May 31<sup>st</sup> allows for some sort of closure for seniors.

Ms. Ducommun then shared her concerns for the neighborhood surrounding the Winnetka campus and the logistics of the Walk the Stage on Trevian Way. Discussion ensued between Ms. Ducommun and Dr. Sally on this topic. Mr. McLane added that he hopes that this will be one and done and suggested it be given a chance as the school has committed to this celebration and will plan it well. Dr. Sally noted that he would be happy to work with Ms. Ducommun on the logistics planned to use her expertise. Ms. Hahn then wanted to confirm that public safety was involved and was helping with logistics. She then inquired if the virtual ceremony would be available for out-of-town family, to which Mrs. Dubravec confirmed. Ms. Albrecht then shared her thoughts, including working on the issues that have been raised, while also supporting and celebrating seniors.

Dr. Sally went on to share about the last days of school. Seniors last day of school is May 21<sup>st</sup>. For all other grades, teachers have plans ready through the end of the year with closure plans set for classes on June 2<sup>nd</sup> and June 3<sup>rd</sup>. On June 5<sup>th</sup>, as is typical each school year, teachers will conduct individual conferences with students regarding incompletes, grades and other feedback. Teachers will then move on to District Planning Days during the second week of June. Structure will be provided for these days as teachers plan for the 20-21 school year. Summer school will begin June 15<sup>th</sup> and will be remote due to ISBE guidelines. The District has expanded course availability to the extent that it can. Expanded support will be provided to those students who have incompletes. There are also plans in the works for Extended School Year (ESY). Athletics will begin remote and the District will wait for further guidance on that piece.

Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, spoke about the summer plans for ESY, which is a program for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). They qualify for these services when they have demonstrated a need for this accommodation due to potential regression of skills or recoupment of time over the course of the year. ESY will look different for the Educational and Life Skills (ELS) and Transition students. However, the program will look similar for those students at the Resource level and at the New Trier Learning Center (NTLC). Much has been learned about remote learning over the past couple of months, both staff and parents have been phenomenal, but in order to continue this over the summer, some adjustments are necessary. The state of Illinois is also requiring Special Education to complete Individualized Remote Plans for students so parents can understand what these services look like. For the most part, ESY will be a reduction from four hours to three hours, specifically for ELS and Transition students. Another program, Summer Recreation, that the department has offered in the past, usually in the afternoons will not run. With limited or no access to the community for recreation and leisure activities, it did not make sense for the department to offer this program this summer. This decision was also informed by a survey sent to parents to gauge interest in running the program. Plans are being finalized for ESY and Dr. Panopoulos thanked parents for all the work that they have done in supporting their students and keeping them engaged.

Dr. Sally then discussed the plan for Fall Reopening, which was also previously discussed at the April Board Meeting. He noted that there were eight committees with the first four being the ones that need to be started quickly as they plan for the school's reopening. They include Daily Schedule, Curriculum and Instruction, Logistics and Managing and Tracking In-School Health and Screening. He then went through the six considerations that each committee needs to contemplate. Dr. Sally then discussed the four different scenarios for the 20-21 school year. They include all in-school (some students and staff at home), some in-school (based on individual/state guidelines), all remote, and switching between these options. The committee that is working on the daily schedule has determined that the school

would greatly benefit from using the same schedule all year in order to facilitate curriculum planning for teachers, create predictability for students and staff and reduce stress in transitions. The school learned that the typical nine period day is not sustainable in remote learning. The committee is considering options that very much relate to the blue/green/gray days as known as block scheduling. Dr. Sally then went on to discuss the parameters that the committee is thinking about in relation to having a block schedule next year. They include not reducing student choices, ensuring that the schedule meets the needs of commuting teachers and students as well as the needs of students with IEPs. Dr. Sally noted that neighboring schools run a block schedule and while there is a loss of contact days and curriculum breadth with this kind of schedule, at the same time however, it reduces student stress and increases the depth of curriculum.

Mr. Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, presented on the Curriculum and Instruction Reopening Committee. He shared the purpose statement of the committee, which is to support teachers as they transition from New Trier's traditional nine-period schedule to block scheduling. He went on to share the goals, which include developing standards of practice and what is needed to support and implement them as well as having a professional development plan in place. Mr. Tragos is also working with Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources, to develop a substitute boot camp plan for the 2020-2021 school year as the District knows that teachers will be in and out of school and a well-trained group of subs will be important. Mr. Tragos noted that the committee has 24 members who represent all areas of the school.

Next, Mrs. Dubravec shared about the Extracurricular committee she is co-chairing with Mr. Augie Fontanetta, Athletic Director. The members of this committee are coaches, club sponsors, from performing arts and speech and debate, as well as include support staff. Mrs. Dubravec shared the purpose statement, which is to provide students with a good extracurricular experience in various scenarios. She noted that many of these programs are large in number, so that requires plans to be creative and thoughtful, while providing the best experience for students in these areas.

Mr. Johnson then presented on the committee that he is leading, which is Logistics. The purpose of this committee is to plan for the safe and efficient logistical operations of the District. He then outlined what the committee will focus on such as transportation, food service, cleaning protocols and social distancing.

Dr. Hayes is overseeing the In-School Health and Wellness committee. They are tasked with creating and implementing a plan to support the physical health needs of students and staff however that may look next school year. There is good representation from across the school, but especially from those who are in health services. Dr. Hayes then shared what the committee would focus on, such as standards for personal protective equipment, social distancing and enhanced cleaning, which overlaps a bit with the Logistics committee. A major focus of the committee will be on screening staff and students and ensuring those who are ill are staying at home as well as tracking those who are sick. They will also determine best practices for isolating those students who become ill at school. In addition to these items, the school will still need to comply with yearly state mandates, ensure it is prepared as it is a vaccine distribution site for the Township, and finally, implement professional development related to physical health and wellness practices.

Dr. Sally then shared final thoughts about some of the issues the school is facing, particularly how many students could fit in its facilities with social distancing and if the school were to have some students in school while others are at home, that has implications for families. There is a great deal of coordination happening within the Township, so that plans are in step with the sender schools. This coordination is also happening regionally with area schools as staff members may have children in area elementary schools and need to be home with them. ISBE will continue to come up with guidance around this and the hope is for regional guidance as well as other schools will have similar issues. Dr. Sally then invited questions and comments from Board members.

Ms. Hahn commented that she is staggered by how much work is occurring. She noted that tonight's presentation focused on internal planning, but was interested to know about the part of process of the school reaching out to parents, students and other schools. Dr. Sally responded that the school needs to make sure that it has the foundations and fundamentals understood which are very complex. That is the work that is currently taking place, but it cannot be complete without as much stakeholder involvement as is reasonable. Decisions will have to be made quickly as to give teachers enough time to plan so the student experience can be as positive as possible. Dr. Sally does not want a situation where the District is scrambling because there is something that has not been thought of, and while that may happen, the intent is think of all the scenarios and plan for them.

Mr. Dronen inquired if before a vaccine comes out, if a parent chooses not to send their student to school because they are high risk or there are adults at home that are part of the high risk population, will wide discretion be given to parents or is it too early to discuss that. Dr. Sally replied that it was not too early to talk about this in concept, and yes, the first consideration is the health and safety of staff and students and that there are families and staff in all types of situations. He suspects that ISBE will offer guidance about this that is in line with what New Trier is thinking, if it is not, the District will have to work through those changes. The District will need to hear ISBE's guidance on this, but the principle of students' and families' safety and health is number one. Mr. Dronen then inquired if the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has come out with any guidelines for schools. Dr. Hayes responded that just in the last week, they have published guidelines for schools for consideration of reopening. This includes a flow chart to help schools determine when and how to reopen for in-person learning with more detailed documents behind that. Dr. Sally shared his thoughts, noting that some guidance is starting to come out for large high schools and he hopes that ISBE's guidelines are comprehensive enough. The issues with a large high school are different than an elementary school or even a smaller high school. He then gave an example of this. The principles are fairly well understood, but where science and medicine will be as August approaches can be a game changer, so the District is constantly tracking as much information as it can.

In building off of Ms. Hahn's comments and inquiries, Mr. McLane asked how the committees will engage with cohort and neighboring schools as well as parents. He noted there is plenty of opportunity to learn laterally as much as there is longitudinally through CDC. Dr. Sally shared this is absolutely happening amongst high schools as they are relying on the good thinking of each other to see what might have been missed and to see what good ideas are out there. Several of the committees have been working and listening to the ideas of others. Dr. Sally also noted that the school will continue to get input from parents and students as well.

Mr. McLane then noted that he had concerns at last month's Board meeting regarding a potential surge in summer school registrations and inquired where summer school was at now. Mr. Tragos provided an update on summer school noting that there has been an uptick in enrollments and requests for courses. Waitlists were created as well as a process for clearing them. Mr. Tragos concluded that for the vast majority of students who were placed on a waitlist have found a seat in a course so far.

Dr. Glucksman noted that this is uncharted territory and a situation where one hopes for the best, but prepares for the worst. While no one knows what is going to happen, the school is planning for the contingencies and will be layered on top by families' choices. He stated that the more voices you have involved, the better from all the stakeholders. Superseded on this is what are the different levels of government organizations and cohort schools going to do. He thought this was a good nucleus for starting and then expand the membership. Dr. Glucksman shared his appreciation and noted that this work cannot be started too early.

Ms. Ducommun shared her concern for ensemble classes, music and performing arts classes. A student may choose not to come because of attitudes towards vaccines or due to health concerns, it could be difficult to schedule and accommodate students, so the school will have to be really forgiving and accommodating. Dr. Sally agreed that the school will need to be forgiving, accommodating and flexible. At some point, life will return to normal, and Dr. Sally hopes that happens at some time during the next school year, but if it does not, the school is prepared to keep moving students' education and extracurricular interests forward as best it can with other solutions.

Ms. Ducommun then inquired if the administration has thought about having half the students in the building one day and the other half in the building the next day. Dr. Sally responded that that idea was being discussed and the Logistics committee is in the process of determining if this sort of plan is feasible with social distancing. He went on to share additional thoughts.

Mr. Robitaille inquired if there is a date by which Dr. Sally needs to make a decision on what operating model the District is going to deploy. Dr. Sally explained that the District has a plan that works for any of the four scenarios that were shared. Depending on the state's guidance and the timing of that, it may force New Trier to make a decision. As July 15<sup>th</sup> draws near, the District will need to start to really think about how its starting school. He suggested that the July Board meeting would be a good time to have that conversation. Ms. Ducommun inquired if July 15<sup>th</sup> was a drop dead date, to which Dr. Sally replied that it was not. For him, a decision could be made up until a few days before school starts as this situation is ever changing. This work upfront will help the District be prepared and having one schedule all year will also help planning. While the logistics of the schedule need to be worked out, administrators do not believe it will hurt student learning and opportunities, but it will look different for students and

teachers. This is the best way to transition through this upcoming school year, with the hope to return to a more traditional school year the following year.

Ms. Hahn then inquired if the District had the right to require anyone entering the buildings to wear masks and gloves and if so, does the District need to provide those items. Dr. Sally noted that guidelines say that facemasks should be required, and from a legal standpoint, the District will make sure it has this worked out appropriately. Mr. Johnson noted that the Logistics committee has not yet gotten to this point, but are certainly thinking about what the requirements might be. Dr. Hayes' committee is also working on this. Mr. Johnson shared additional thoughts and options.

Ms. Albrecht thanked everyone for their work as there is no template for this. The unknown of what the next issue is going to be has impacted everyone. Everyone has done a tremendous amount of work to figure out options and start a process that could end up changing. She shared additional thoughts, noting that Dr. Sally is constantly collaborating with area superintendents and the sender schools' superintendents.

Dr. Sally concluded by thanking a variety of groups. He knows the community understands the challenges and is very supportive. Parents, students, staff have all been willing to pitch in and help which is a fantastic feeling as it removes some of the anxiousness associated with working through all these details. There are a lot of people who can help and have good expertise and it is great to be a part of this community.

## **VII. Administrative Items**

### **A. Treasurer's Report for April 2020**

Mr. Johnson presented the April 2020 Treasurer's Report. Total balances for District accounts are \$133,000,723. There is a continued drop in short term interest rates to 0.71%, so the District is seeing the effect of lower interest rates in its investment earnings. Long term rates, which were previously locked in, are 2.18%. The District is seeing this fall as higher yield investments roll off and are replaced with ones with lower interest rates that the District can get in the market right now. The good news is that the District continues to see regular local, state and federal payments as expected. The vast majority of the winter portion tax levy is paid.

### **B. Financial Reports for April 2020**

Mr. Johnson reviewed the Financial Reports for April 2020. Operating revenue was \$112,831,962 for the first ten months of the year, or 1.67% higher than April 2019. Tax collections continue to be paid out and should finish the year on budget. Local sources are impacted by refunds due to the pandemic, for example, bus fees. The adopted budget has a 2.26% increase in operating revenue for the year, there is a small amount of catch up to do in the last two months of the fiscal year, but the District is well positioned to do that. Operating expenditures were \$87,007,650 through April. They were 2.27% higher than last year at this time. The monthly expenditures for April were down approximately \$700,000 compared to last year as the District has shifted to online instruction. The adopted budget for operating expenditures is 2.10% higher than last year. The District expects to close the year on budget.

Mr. Johnson went on to note that much of the attention has shifted to preparing the budget for next year. The District's intent is to put together a realistic and balanced budget that focuses its resources where they are needed to support students while providing a safe educational environment. To do that, the District continues to closely monitor factors that may impact the budget next year, both on the revenue and expenditure sides. Property tax collections are delayed as Cook County is allowing residents to pay their property taxes up to two months late without any interest penalty. The District is well positioned to handle this from a cash flow perspective and is also making additional allowances for delinquencies that may occur. The District is seeing reduced interest income projections for next year as interest rates are still projected to be low. The District will also see reduced fees from rental income as the summer is a time when the school rents its facilities to other groups. Student fees for next year will remain flat and there will be a reduction in the cost of iPads for freshmen, so the District is lowering its projections for student fees for next year. On the expenditures side, the District is making allowances for the costs related to the pandemic due to cleaning supplies or other adjustments that are needed to support the plan that was discussed earlier in the meeting. The District has also seen some increased health insurance costs since it last reviewed its plan in January, which is unrelated to the current situation, it is just a larger than typical increase next year and the District is accommodating for that in the budget. Mr. Johnson looks forward to providing more information at the June Board of Education meeting. The budget will then be presented for adoption at the July meeting. The District looks forward to presenting a balanced and realistic budget at that time. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Ducommun thought it was interesting when Cook County announced the property tax timing relief as they did not change the due date of the bills, but instead said they would not charge interest for two months. She thought it was rather clever as they will get people who will pay on time as well as those who have their taxes escrowed. She does not believe that the District will be terribly late in its receipts, to which Mr. Johnson concurred. He went on to share additional comments, noting that the District is keeping more liquid.

Ms. Ducommun then shared her concerns about successive tax collection as loan defaults begin to happen and the escrows go away. She believes for now it is ok, but the longer that this goes on, the harder it gets for everybody, to which Mr. Johnson agreed. Mr. McLane built on that by mentioning the lessons learned from the Great Recession and the downturn in property taxes and what can be picked up from that period. Mr. McLane noted that it would be helpful at future Board meetings to touch on that. Mr. Johnson said that it will be discussed at a future meeting and mentioned that he and Mr. Myron Spiwak, Director of Business Services, have looked at many articles and webinars on this subject. Mr. Johnson went on to share additional comments referencing Ms. Ducommun's thoughts as well. The District is monitoring this carefully and will bring information to future meetings.

Mr. Dronen then inquired if there was a projection on increasing health care costs. Mr. Johnson provided historical information about this topic as well as the current increase above projections. He did note that it was interesting to see date usage for healthcare during the pandemic. Hospitals are only seeing COVID patients and emergencies, so decreased utilization of healthcare is being seen. In the short-term, it is saving the insurance plan a little bit of money, but in the long-term there are health consequences for people since they have not been getting the care they need to stay healthy long-term. The District is watching that carefully to see how it impacts the renewal next year.

Ms. Albrecht then inquired about the federal money that Mr. Johnson said was paid earlier last year, if the District thinks it will be caught up by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Johnson answered that he thought the District was trending to be caught up and everything has been submitted that was needed. The state acts as a pass-through agent for the federal money and they pass it along as soon as they receive it. There is also a period after July 1<sup>st</sup> where the District can recognize revenue that was meant for the previous year. The District is seeing continued state and federal payments in a timely fashion and this has been backed up by receipts, therefore Mr. Johnson is not concerned about it right now.

Ms. Albrecht also noted the Moody's renewal rating. Mr. Johnson went on to explain that the District has gone to Moody's each time it has issued bonds and the District is fortunate to have a Aaa credit rating. This reflects the good credit of the District due to the strong community employment and tax base as well as the strong financial management of the District. Mr. Johnson went on to share additional comments, concluding that the strong rating allows the District to access bonding capacity at lower rates which saves taxpayers' money. Those resources can then be used for the benefits of its students and community instead of paying higher interest costs.

Ms. Ducommun commented that as she was reading through the state reimbursements that the District was requesting, and noted that at a certain point, the state is not going to have any wherewithal to pay almost anything. She cautioned, that going forward in next year's budget, that the District is careful about the \$3 million it thinks it will be getting from the state on the reimbursements that it is asking for now for the continuation of this school year. Mr. Johnson agreed and noted that he and Mr. Spiwak have put together a tentative revenue budget for next year assuming that the District is not going to receive all of its anticipated state revenue. He went on to share additional thoughts and details pertaining to this topic. Finally, he noted that the District is going to prepare for this sort of situation in next year's budget as he does think reimbursements will slow down a bit.

**\*C. Agreement with Wight & Co to continue Winnetka Campus East Side Academics and Athletics Study**

Mr. Johnson then presented on the agreement with Wight & Co to continue the Winnetka Campus East Side Academics and Athletics Study. Last August, the District presented a 15-Year Facility Plan to the Board of Education that identified significant student and maintenance needs related to the Kinetic Wellness (KW) and Athletic Programs at the Winnetka Campus. The plan includes a recommendation to expand or replace the 1928 Gates Gym and the 1925 Boiler Plant on the east portion of the campus and to renovate associated spaces. This plan would improve spaces for athletics and KW, as well as, core academics. The plan was to develop options that can accomplish these goals without the need for a bond referendum. In December 2019, the District engaged Wight & Co to do an analysis of these needs and to develop options.

Wight and their consultants have worked with Mr. Fontanetta, KW faculty, and Mr. Dave Conway, Director of Physical Plant Services, and others to develop four options. The first is the Status Quo, which is continued maintenance that is becoming more expensive over time and no educational enhancement. Option A, renovates the

existing facility within the same footprint and while this would improve the maintenance profile, the District would only see limited educational enhancements and it would lock in those improvements in a way that would be difficult to expand on in the future. Option B, includes the replacement of the Gates Gym and additional instructional spaces for core academics in a renovated portion of the building that connects the new gym to the existing campus. Option B.1, is the same as Option B, but would have additional classrooms. Option C, which has both a new gym and new structure connecting to the existing campus.

The Administration and the Facilities Steering Committee recommend that this study continue through the summer and fall with a focus on Option B and Option B.1 with continued evaluation of Option C. The Administration has negotiated a contract extension with Wight to continue the work they started in December through the summer and fall. Then in February 2021, this would be brought back to the Board for a decision about either proceeding with a project with an opening at the start of the 2023 – 2024 school year for updated spaces or delaying it until a future year. All fees that the District pays for the work will apply to the cost of the eventual project. The proposed fee for this continuation of the work that will occur from the summer through next February will be significantly reduced from the original plan. The District will have an opportunity to pause this work in September if it so chooses. Additionally, if the District does not decide to move forward in February, the fees expended to date would be applied to the project when it resumes for up to two years. This gives the District protection that the money it is investing now will apply to the project in the future, even if in February 2021, the decision is made to pause the work for two years. As part of this agreement, by February 2021, Wight will produce schematic design drawings and customary deliverables that this phase entailed. During a typical school year, the east side of the Winnetka Campus is one of the most vibrant places, with thousands of students, teachers, coaches and visitors utilizing it every day and is an exciting part of the campus that supports the needs of students. The District looks forward to continuing its work visioning and planning how this area can better serve the needs of students and the community. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments and also invited those from the Facilities Steering Committee to share their thoughts.

Mr. McLane, who sits on the Facilities Steering Committee, shared that the process has been very well thought out and has also been in conjunction with the Finance Committee. He also noted the discussion that has taken place regarding the role of additional classrooms. From these discussions, he highlighted the adaptability of Wight and the entire team that is working on this as it has been impressive.

Mr. Robitaille noted that one of the challenges that occurred during the west side project was that it was fairly late in the process when real cost estimates were received. Mr. Robitaille shared with Dr. Sally and Mr. Johnson earlier in the day that he was eager to see, earlier in the process, at least preliminary cost estimates, because it is important to know if the project will cost more sooner rather than later. Mr. Robitaille wanted to confirm that Dr. Sally said that the cost estimate would be received in the fall in collaboration between Wight and Pepper. Dr. Sally confirmed that was correct, that while there are details to work out, there is a set of items on the list that are being reviewed for continuous study. At some point, Dr. Sally said, an independent estimate will need to be done as well. Mr. Johnson shared additional information about the estimates, which included thoughts on the construction market.

Mr. Dronen mentioned that at a Finance Committee meeting, Mr. Johnson noted that he anticipates that construction costs will come down next year as well as the following year. Mr. Johnson noted that construction economists are seeing a softening of the market, which was happening in Chicago even prior to the pandemic. Tentatively, if the school was going to open in the 2023-2023 timeframe, the time that the District is looking to bid aligns with what some think may be low points for the construction market. Mr. Johnson also mentioned that the District is looking at the “shovel ready” idea and making sure it is poised to take advantage of any vehicles the government may make available in terms of lower cost debt. Dr. Glucksman sent an article that shared that the state of Illinois released the first \$25 million “shovel ready” grant, so Mr. Conway has been researching this. New Trier may not qualify as the money may go to those schools and town in more financial need, but it did surprise Mr. Johnson to see this already and he believes there will be more down the road. Mr. Johnson reiterated that the District is focused on using existing resources and is not looking to go back to referendum on this project. One of the goals was to use these existing resources and financing structures that the community supports the District with.

Mr. Dronen then confirmed that the \$300,000 fee with Wight & Co through September, if the District decides to not move forward with the project now, but will resume again in two years, can still use the ideas going forward. Mr. Johnson responded that the District will receive the deliverables, if the decision is made to go until February, it will receive the schematic design, if not, the District receives what is available up until that point. The Wight fee is 6.65% on the actual construction costs, so what the District has paid during the study will be applied to that 6.65%. The

unique part of the contract is the option for a two-year pause, so the money that has already been spent will apply to the 6.65% fee on construction. The fact that the District can get a credit for up to two years is a good structure that allows the District to make sure the resources it will invest between now and then are well spent.

Mr. Dronen then inquired what the main distinction was between Option B and Option B.1, to which Mr. Johnson replied it would be the addition of a third floor with classrooms above an area on the second floor that connects the North and Tower building to the Gates Gym. The benefit of Option B.1 increases the classroom counts even more than the second floor. This option allows the District to accomplish more in its 15-year plan in a more cost effective manner which will bring the benefits to students and the community earlier. There will be discussion about how this impacts the 15-year plan as the study continues this summer.

Mr. Dronen noted that he had an opportunity to visit the Gates Gym and the boiler room with Ms. Hahn, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Conway this past Friday. It is very clear that the current facilities do not meet the District's standards for the needs of KW students. He shared other thoughts as well pertaining to flooding and also noted that the committee has done a good job putting together these recommendations. Mr. Johnson responded to Mr. Dronen's comments about the flooding. Mr. Dronen also noted the importance of Mr. McLane's comments about additional classrooms.

Ms. Albrecht reiterated one of the comments that Mr. Dronen made regarding the next phase of development. Deliverables will be available in September that could assist the decision in moving forward or not with the project, then whatever deliverables that come in February will be distinct, so the District is not waiting until February to have valuable data to continue to explore these options. Mr. Johnson confirmed that, noting that this will be a continuous topic of discussion that the District wants to be very transparent about and talking about throughout the summer, both in committee structures and at the Board meetings as appropriate.

Mr. Robitaille moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded, the motion that the Board of Education approves the contract amendment with Wight & Company as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the amendment. 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, April 1-30, 2020
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Leave of Absence, Retirements and Termination)
- The Consolidated District Plan for FY 2021 for the following grants: Title II- Part A, Title IV-Part A, Title I, Part A, and IDEA, Part B Flow-Through.
- The contract amendment with Quest food services as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement.
- The contract amendment with Alltown Transportation for Regular Bus Service as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement.
- The contract amendment with Alltown Transportation for Special Education Transportation as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement.
- The contract amendment with Safeway Transportation as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement.
- The contract amendment with Citicare Transportation as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement.

Dr. Glucksman moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: the Bill List for the Period, April 1-30, 2020; Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Leave of Absence, Retirements and Termination); the Consolidated District Plan for FY 2021 for the following grants: Title II- Part A, Title IV-Part A, Title I, Part A, and IDEA, Part B Flow-Through; the contract amendment with Quest food services as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement; the contract amendment with Alltown Transportation for Regular Bus Service as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement; the contract amendment with Alltown Transportation for Special Education Transportation as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement; the contract amendment with Safeway Transportation as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement and the contract amendment with

Citicare Transportation as presented and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute the agreement. Ms. Hahn 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.

**IX. Board Member Reports**

Mr. Dronen shared that NSSED met on May 13<sup>th</sup>. One agenda item was their financial model, which will be up for a vote at their June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Johnson and Dr. Sally have the proposal and Mr. Johnson will provide a brief summary at the June 8<sup>th</sup> Board of Education meeting. This will then assist Mr. Dronen in his vote at the NSSED meeting. It is cost neutral for New Trier with a differential of \$4,000 - \$5,000 with what New Trier expected to pay and what it would pay next year. Also discussed was the proposed name change from NSSED to True North Educational Coop District 804 and a vote on the new name will take place at NSSED's November meeting. The final agenda item was regarding collective bargaining with their faculty association.

Ms. Hahn shared that the Board Policy Committee is meeting every two weeks and is moving through their work on the Policy Reference Education Subscription Service (PRESS) policies. The committee will meet tomorrow with Dr. Renee Zoladz and will focus on policies related to Personnel.

Ms. Hahn also shared that the Booster Club recently met. Although the Booster Bash was cancelled and there was a short fall in their Bricks sale, they were still able to donate a projected \$120,000 to New Trier Athletics and Kinetic Wellness. Mr. Fontanetta, is working on purchasing items off the Athletics' and Kinetic Wellness' wish list. The Booster Club, along with Mr. Fontanetta and Mrs. Dubravec, have also celebrated senior athletes. The Booster Club is also planning for next year.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following dates:

- The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>.
- The Student Recognition Program will occur prior to the June 8<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.
- Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> will be the Virtual Graduation and that weekend will be the delivery of yard signs.

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

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

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Cathleen Albrecht, President