

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
December 14, 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 Monday, December 14, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

**Members Present**

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

**Administrators Present**

Dr. Paul Sally, Superintendent  
Mr. Christopher Johnson, Associate 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

**Members Present Via Phone**

Dr. Marc Glucksman, Vice President

**Also Present**

Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Mr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer; Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Jen McDonough, Applied Arts Department Faculty and New Trier High School Educational Association President; Ms. Katja Steen, Modern and Classical Languages Department; Ms. JJ Hill, Modern and Classical Languages Department; Mr. Scott Williams, Assistant Principal for Student Services; Mr. Mike Lee, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services; Mr. Augie Fontanetta, Athletic Director; Mr. Andy Butler, Kinetic Wellness Department Chair; Mr. Dave Conway, Director of Physical Plant Services; 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 – 5:00 p.m. – C234**

Ms. Albrecht called the Regular Meeting of December 14, 2020 of the Board of Education to order at 5:00 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Ms. Albrecht then stated that a full, in-person meeting is not practical or prudent due to the Governor’s declared disaster.

Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

Ms. Albrecht asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Dr. Glucksman moved that the Board adjourn to closed session for the purpose of 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 litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes.

Mr. Robitaille 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.

**II. CLOSED SESSION – 5:30 p.m. – A303**

### **III. BUSINESS MEETING – Open Session – 6:30 p.m. – C234**

Ms. Albrecht recalled the Regular Meeting of December 14, 2020 of the Board of Education to order at 6:45 p.m. Ms. Albrecht confirmed that Dr. Glucksman, who was participating via telephone, could hear her. 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 November 16, 2020 (open and closed session) and the Special Meeting of November 24, 2020 (open and closed session). There were no requests for changes. Mr. Robitaille moved, and Ms. Ducommun seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 16, 2020 (open and closed session) and Special Meeting of November 24, 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 and give it to Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications. There were seven requests for public comment. Ms. Albrecht reminded commenters to keep their remarks to three minutes each in accordance with Board Policy 2-230. Ms. Albrecht noted that given the number of those who wished to speak that the allotted thirty minutes would be enough.

1. Ms. Katja Steen and Ms. JJ Hill, Modern and Classical Languages Department faculty, shared a letter signed by over 80% of the Modern and Classical Languages Department regarding faculty accommodations.
2. Ms. Susie Halpin, parent, shared a letter that was sent to teachers of District 225 regarding their family or medical accommodations. She urged the Board to ask New Trier teachers to follow their contract and come back to work.
3. Mr. Andy Preda, parent, shared comments about the need to solidify the move to the two-track model on January 25<sup>th</sup>. He also encouraged a plan where 50% attendance means 50%. He also encouraged the District's leadership to push as hard as possible to ensure that the 2021-2022 school year is as close to normal as possible.
4. Mr. Eric Hungness, parent, shared comments that the tone of the letter for the expanded E-track was not very welcoming. He noted that there are students who did not sign up for this track because they did not want to be stigmatized as having significant struggles. He also shared comments about Mondays as Grey Days and reclaiming them as instruction for students.
5. Ms. Kathy Hulbert, parent, shared comments on the need to bring students in-person.
6. Mr. Ted Dabrowski, parent and a founder of Open New Trier, shared comments about the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Administration and the Teachers' Association. He also suggested reconstituting the Reopening Advisory Board (RAB).
7. Ms. Laura Bayindiryan, parent, shared comments about having a significant number of students back in school.

Ms. Albrecht noted that public comment is an opportunity for the public to address the Board but is not a back and forth discussion between a commenter and the Board. Information may be addressed in an agenda item during the meeting.

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

#### **A. Update from Campus Principals and FOIA Report**

Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal for the Northfield Campus, shared the following student events and program updates from that campus:

- The Freshmen Tri-Ship Annual Canned Food Drive concluded on November 30<sup>th</sup>. They collected 9,000 pounds of food as well as monetary donations, which put them well over their goal of 10,000 pounds of food.
- The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) initiative created The Gratitude Tree on the fourth floor of the A building. Post-it notes, in the shapes of leaves, could be filled out with what a person was thankful for and put on the tree. Many students and staff have participated as well as several adviser rooms.

- The Northfield Dance Ensemble premieres at 7:00 pm on Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. The link will be on the Dance Division and Performing Arts webpages. The Ensemble includes 45 dancers and ten student choreographers. They partnered with the Student Assistance Program to bring awareness to mental health and 50% of the donations will go to Haven Youth and Family Services.
- Mr. Waechtler thanked Ms. Gail Gamrath, Assistant Principal at the Northfield Campus, Mr. Mark Howard, Freshmen Boys Adviser Chair and Ms. Sue Ellen Haak, Freshmen Girls Adviser Chair, for their work in bringing in students who requested to be in-person. Over 100 additional Freshmen requested additional days on campus and all those students have been accommodated.
- Lastly, an email was sent from Mr. Waechtler and Mrs. Dubravec about finals to faculty as well as families. They will be all remote this year and take place the week following Martin Luther King Day. Finals will follow the period schedule, as opposed to subjects at the same time so teachers are able to proctor their own exams.

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

- She reflected on the Board Recognition Program that took place earlier in the evening by noting the wonderful work of coaches and staff in making the best experiences for students under the current conditions. She noted that for athletics, sectionals were as far as athletes could go this year. Mr. Augie Fontanetta, Athletic Director, and his team did an extraordinary job and set the mark for how winter sports will work. Mrs. Dubravec noted that the hope is to get gymnastics and badminton started soon.
- Concert Choir was selected to perform at IMEC this year. The 2021 conference is cancelled due to Covid but the invitation to perform was extended to next year.
- Two Model UN participants received honorable mention and first place at virtual tournaments.
- The Math team is currently in second place in their division.
- The Social Service Board raised over \$9,000 with Northside Tutoring to benefit Asian Youth Services.
- Girls Club held a virtual 5K Fundraiser this past Saturday and raised \$3,000.
- The Tri-Ship Tree Sales sold out in three days of trees and greens, which normally takes about four weeks. Mr. Scott Fricke, Kinetic Wellness Department Faculty and Sponsor, and Tri-Ship students had gross sales over \$34,000.
- The Northwestern University Settlement House (NUSH) service project just concluded. This project helps to support families in need for the holidays. Instead of gifts this year, \$41,000 worth of gift cards were donated.
- The Anne Brierley Gallery is doing a Virtual Coffeehouse Exhibit showcasing the work of many students in various art classes. Ms. Alicia Landes, Art Department Chair, Ms. Monique Boyd, Art Department Faculty, and Mr. Mark Bowers, Art Department Faculty, worked to transform the exhibit from in-person to virtual.
- Mrs. Dubravec, along with Dr. Tim Hayes, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education, hosted an evening on mental health entitled, "Understanding How Stress and Anxiety Operate for Kids and Parents" with Dr. Nancy Burgoyne, Chief Clinical Officer at the Northwestern Family Institute and who is also on the Reopening Advisory Board. Other hosts included New Trier faculty, Ms. Hannah Krepps, School Psychologist and Ms. Kris Hummel, Student Assistance Program (SAP) Coordinator. Overwhelmingly, the feedback on the webinar was very positive. The webinar was recorded and is on Mrs. Dubravec's Principal's Page on New Trier's website. Dr. Burgoyne covered the scientific side of stress, Ms. Hummel covered skills of resiliency of the pandemic while Ms. Krepps shared key strategies for parents to help their students thrive. Mrs. Dubravec shared about the work Mr. Tragos, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, has done with leaders to talk through how the school is working to help struggling students. Mrs. Dubravec shared part of Dr. Burgoyne's presentation that resonated with the work Mr. Tragos and department leaders have done. She shared that New Trier is lucky to have Ms. Krepps and Ms. Hummel. Ms. Hahn added that she viewed the webinar and shared her thoughts about it and encouraged others to view it. Ms. Albrecht added comments as well.
- The radio play, *It's a Wonderful Life*, will be available for streaming on Broadway On Demand. It will be available from December 16<sup>th</sup> to December 18<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Hilerre Kirsch, Performing Arts Coordinator, has been working on this with students.

Next, Dr. Hayes provided the Board with an update on the Covid vaccines. He noted that in October, Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) published their distribution plan for the vaccines. Healthcare workers and other essential workers will be the first to receive them, followed by long-term care facilities. Then vaccines would go to critical and other essential workers and Dr. Hayes notes that teachers would be in that group. New Trier does have a plan to be a vaccine distribution center and is

working with CCDPH on this. Their current plan is to distribute the vaccine through physicians, health services, pharmacies and some small distributing through local health departments. It is unclear if CCDPH will need New Trier to be a vaccination distribution center and if they do, it may not be until spring or summer, if at all. The Pfizer vaccine, the one that was first approved, needs to be stored at very low temperatures, which the school could not accommodate. However, if the Moderna vaccine receives emergency approval, it could be stored in a regular freezer which the school has available. Dr. Hayes will provide updates as they are available to the Board.

Mr. McLane inquired as to the lobbying opportunities the District has to move teachers up in priority and what the school is doing to address the various organizations that represent it. Dr. Sally responded that there are a number of efforts going on right now within the state. The various teachers' association are in communication. The District's main connection to Springfield is through ED-RED and the school has been in discussion with them on this topic. Mr. Johnson, Associate Superintendent for Finance and Operations, noted that he spoke with ED-RED last week and their thinking is that the Illinois Education Association (IEA) is doing effective messaging around this in Springfield. ED-RED is adding their voice as appropriate but feels that teachers' voices are represented in terms of prioritizing vaccine distribution.

Mr. Johnson gave the FOIA report noting that there were five requests since the last Board meeting, all of which are closed. There were three requests for information on reopening, one for stats on student attendance and one for aggregate information on academic performance.

### **B. Report on New Trier Reopening and Operational Plan for 2020-2021**

Dr. Sally reported on the New Trier Reopening and Operational Plan for 2020-2021. He outlined the agenda which included an update on the Reopening Advisory Board (RAB), the one-track model and expanding Track E, an update on the dashboard and saliva screening, a contact tracing overview, mandated saliva screening for in-person learning followed by discussion by the Board.

He began with the purpose of the RAB, noting that the group is advisory and is not a decision-making body. They review data and do not advocate for one side or another. Its focus now is on building operations and internal metrics as the group pivoted away from external metrics. The RAB looks at this information, discusses it and passes it along to the Board of Education. Another purpose is to gather insight from expert medical professionals. Decisions on reopening are made by the Board and Superintendent and not the RAB. Dr. Sally went on to share about the RAB discussions and information, noting that presentations and agendas are updated weekly on the RAB webpage. The dashboard and metrics are updated daily and/or weekly depending on the particular piece of information.

The RAB uses a metrics chart to give feedback and provide information to the Board. Dr. Sally walked through the chart, noting a few changes that have been made. The participation level for the saliva screening for minimal concern has been increased to 90%. There are also building metrics such as compliance, personal protective equipment (PPE), Physical Plant Services (PPS) and classroom staffing levels as well as health services staffing levels. The external metrics have been reset to the original thresholds. They are advisory to the Board and are about making sure that internal metrics are strong when the external metrics are high. Hospital capacity has been added and Dr. Sally shared details about this.

Next, Dr. Sally shared that there was a December 1<sup>st</sup> decision to continue with the one-track model and expand the Track E. Over 275 students have been added to this track. That option and the form is still open for parents and the school continues to add students. He encouraged those interested in this for the last three weeks of the semester to complete the form and contact one's adviser. The December 1<sup>st</sup> decision also included the approval to move to a two-track model starting second semester.

Dr. Sally noted that the District continues to improve and clarify the different pieces of information that are on the dashboard. A chart on the website provides a summary of the current students and staff who have been excluded from the building as they are in one of the categories of quarantine. He also shared data about the saliva screener. External metrics are also included for Township and Staff Zip Codes, tracking this information is important in order to understand the context the District is operating in.

With presumptive positives and other close contact situations, contact tracing needs to occur. It is a significant effort on the part of the school and Dr. Hayes as well as the health services staff have been very involved in this and Dr. Sally thanked them for their work. Dr. Hayes then provided a short overview of the contact tracing, defining it as identifying someone who has been in close contact, within six feet of someone for more than 15 minutes total in a

24-hour period. Then those who have been in close contact with an infected person and need to receive notification about potential quarantine are identified. As a school, New Trier also has a responsibility for exposure notifications. People are notified even if they are not considered a close contact but were in the same space as an infected person. Dr. Hayes walked through New Trier's contact tracing process. Dr. Sally noted that an exposure letter is different than close contact. Dr. Hayes noted that contact tracing is standard procedure and has been around for many years, but the six feet for more than 15 minutes is specific to Covid. Dr. Hayes then shared a calendar with an example of the exposure notification timeline including additional details. He also shared the definitions of close contact from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). Dr. Sally noted the mitigations efforts that are in place.

Next was an update on saliva screening and Dr. Sally noted that screening is transitioning to every week. Mr. Johnson also shared that last week was the first full week that the District invited participation even on the week that students are not scheduled to be in. An additional 700 students participated in the screening. Dr. Sally shared further details, noting that participation, at 84%, is flat or decreasing when comparing those who submitted a sample and those who were also on campus. The District would like to see that much higher, as this would provide additional protection. Those who wish to attend school in-person who are not willing or able to participate may request a hearing.

Finally, Dr. Sally spoke about Trevians caring for Trevians by encouraging everyone to comply with guidelines so schools can remain open. The District would like those who participated in one of the activities that is problematic for the spread of Covid such as large gatherings or non-essential travel to self-quarantine. Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) is currently reviewing new CDC recommended quarantine length moving from fourteen to ten days. The District will follow CCDPH's guidelines and will only change the length once CCDPH has officially done so. Dr. Sally then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen noted that the current student participation rate in the saliva screening is 84%, but 95% of students who are not remote have opted in. He inquired as to the reasoning behind this gap. Dr. Sally provided some reasoning as to the gap with Mr. Johnson doing so as well. Mr. Dronen noted this should be a top priority for parents. Dr. Sally noted that there will also be a question on the Ruvna app to remind parents to have their student submit a sample. Ms. Ducommun shared some potential complications regarding logistics. She particularly shared about parents needing to drop the sample off at some point and them not necessarily knowing if the sample has to be from that morning, which may not always be feasible for families. She wondered if the drop off time could be later or if the drop off box could be placed elsewhere. Mr. Johnson confirmed that students could spit in the tube the evening before and drop it off the next morning. The message is that the District would like the sample within the time parameters set and it being as recent as possible. Mr. Johnson shared additional logistical details, including reminding parents that they can drop off at any campus, not just the one their student attends. The District is open to having drop off locations elsewhere, but that can be difficult as the samples need to stay within a certain temperature range. Ms. Ducommun inquired if the school might survey parents to see what obstacles they face in submitting samples and suggestions for improvement. Mr. Johnson said the District is open to that, especially with those who have not submitted consistently. Mr. Johnson went on to share further information that there is value in having as much checking done prior to people being in the building, but with that comes the commitment to drop off one's sample a day early. Ms. Ducommun noted that everyone is aligned in the goal but commented that there are inherent structural items that keep people from being as committed as they like, and she would like the school to problem solve around that. Mr. Dronen noted the seriousness of this and that there should be 100% participation and if parents do not want to comply, the school may need to consider making this mandatory.

Mr. Dronen noted that a gentleman from the audience expressed a view that the school needs to reclaim Mondays. He asked Dr. Sally to explain why Mondays are remote and to shed more light on this decision. Mr. Tragos spoke to this, noting that the man was referencing grey days. The intention was to build in asynchronous time, as well as time for teachers and students to meet. At the end of first quarter, feedback was gathered from staff, students and parents and adjustments were made to these types of days. The focus became more on the student-teacher connection and getting support as needed. This was done to try and best replicate the informal support that often takes place during the school day between a teacher and their students. The school continues to gather feedback and make improvements about this.

Ms. Ducommun noted that when looking at the metrics chart, it notes that there has been no instances or evidence of transmission within the school, which Dr. Sally confirmed. Ms. Albrecht also noted that this went back to the summer when the District did not have the saliva screener. Ms. Ducommun noted that this is important for everyone

to understand as it gives more confidence that Covid has not been transmitted in the building.

She then inquired if the Covid screening percentage increased in the latest metrics. Dr. Sally noted that the participation level went from 80% to 90% and provided the thinking around that. Discussion continued between Dr. Sally and Ms. Ducommun, with Dr. Sally noting that this percentage increase is an example of the RAB giving the Board specific information and him being in support of the change. The school continues to work with all three associations to increase the participation rate. There have been good collaborative efforts on this, and they will continue. Ms. Ducommun noted that it is not an on/off switch, but rather an indicator that informs the Board to make decisions.

Next, Ms. Ducommun noted that an additional 275 students have been added to Track E. An email was sent to families about the expanded E track and Ms. Ducommun felt that some of the language in it was self-limiting for parents and students. She shared additional thoughts and inquired as to what the school will do to assertively message that it is whether a student needs to be on campus, not whether they are struggling. Ms. Ducommun shared other thoughts, concluding that she would like to see the District send out an additional message in order to get more students in the building. Mr. Dronen inquired to the split between Northfield and Winnetka of the additional 275 students as well as what that brings the percentage of students on campus to. Mr. Waechtler responded that over 100 of the 275 students are on the Northfield campus, with the total of non-attending is at 25%. Ms. Ducommun noted that at the last Board meeting, it was approved that up to 31% of Freshmen students could be on campus daily and up to 32% of students could attend daily at the Winnetka campus.

Ms. Ducommun inquired if there is enough staff to do contact tracing as there was concern about the impact on health services with the increase of students. Dr. Hayes responded there is now a pool of reserved contact tracers who are retired registered nurses. Dr. Hayes noted that the number of cases that have needed contact tracing have gone down over the past two weeks. He anticipates needing to do more contact tracing as the new year begins and with more people on campus. Dr. Hayes noted the school feels prepared in case there is a need to do more contact tracing. Ms. Ducommun also commented that there has been no transmission for those who have had to quarantine due to exposure in the building. Dr. Hayes spoke about the significant distinction between exposure and close contact.

Ms. Ducommun then inquired with the upcoming Winter Break if it would be clearly messaged that students should stay home if their family travels for the holidays. Dr. Sally responded that he will be sending an email to families towards the end of the week.

Ms. Hahn noted that she recently toured the Winnetka campus and although quiet, it is calm, and it seems as though people are confident in the building. She also visited the health services area, noting that Tuesday and Thursday mornings are busy as that is usually when students are notified of their presumptive positives. When capacity is increased in the building, the contact tracing requirements will become more burdensome. She thinks it is a prudent approach to have taken a more measured one to increasing numbers as it allows the school to have the processes down. After sharing additional thoughts, Ms. Hahn inquired if there is a presumptive positive, if that person receives a call from the school. Dr. Hayes confirmed that an email message is sent, and then that student and any siblings who attend New Trier are put on the Ruvna exclusion list meaning they do not receive a notification the following morning. The school then reaches out to the family for initial conversation and then follow up conversations also occur. Ms. Hahn noted that these are not short conversations and shows the intersection of the external metrics and what the school is doing internally and how it all comes into play at the same time. Ms. Hahn believes that the most important internal metric is exposure in the building and her understanding is that contact tracing is how this metric is being assessed. Making sure this process is solid will help the school assess the most important metric to sustaining in-person learning.

Mr. McLane noted that the dashboard and metrics are moving in the right direction. He thanked the District for adding hospital capacity. He also mentioned, regarding Track E, that a link has expired. He also noted it was reassuring to know about the contact tracing and the detail that can be provided to families.

Mr. McLane asked if the RAB will still be open for Board members to observe and why the school has opted not to open those meetings up further. Dr. Sally responded that there have been some sessions in which Board members can listen to the medical professionals on the RAB. Ms. Albrecht emphasized that Board members are only observers at those sessions. Ms. Ducommun clarified that there have been two sessions that the Board has listened to, those sessions did not include the entire RAB. Mr. McLane noted that it was mentioned earlier and thought it would be

good to address why the RAB is contained and offline. Dr. Sally detailed the RAB, sharing that the building metrics teams, run by the campus principals, give that information to the RAB to discuss as well as what other constituents are seeing, especially internally. That information is then passed to the Board as to what the RAB discussed. The representatives on it were meant to be constituents from each group that is impacted by the school. He also mentioned that it is not a voting body. It is a way of taking the information that is out there and putting it into a form that is more digestible for him to share with the Board. He went on to share additional information. Mr. Robitaille noted that it is not an advocacy body, rather it provides data and information that Dr. Sally and the Board use to make decisions. Mr. McLane stated it has been invaluable to get that information and is comfortable with how this has unfolded. Ms. Albrecht noted that it is not uncommon for the District to have advisory boards or committees to advise the Board of Education and gave the example of the Strategic Plan. Ms. Hahn noted that her role on the RAB is a liaison and does not advocate a position, but rather asks for information she thinks will be most helpful to the Board of Education. Dr. Sally responded that as time has gone on, the RAB is at a point where it understands the flow of information that is needed for the Board. The main question that frames the other questions is what does the Board need to know and what does the RAB think the Board needs to know to make decisions, which has been an important shift.

Dr. Glucksman noted that the District and the Board are pioneers and it places an additional burden on them. The screening needs to become habit, and if a question of convenience, as easy as possible, but there are many good things about the screening, which he shared. He does not know why the participation percentage is below 90%, but the school needs to get to that number.

Mr. Robitaille then pivoted to discuss the screening and shared his viewpoint. He noted the mitigation efforts and how social distancing and wearing a mask is a requirement but does not understand why the screening is not required. He is in favor of requiring students and staff to fully participate in the screening program and would like to pursue mandating screening for students. He would also ask the Associations to engage with the administration in figuring out how to make it mandatory for teachers and staff. He shared additional thoughts on this.

Ms. Albrecht commented about the decision to stay with the one track plus the expanded E track model. She noted there was talk about sustainability, and how many elementary schools and peer high schools, public and private, who started fast, went into an adaptive pause. In order to maintain a sustainable plan, the idea was to continue to work with this model and build up through the E track until the District could move to the two-track model at the start of second semester. This was voted on at the last meeting and was the directive from the Board to the Superintendent. Part of the sustainability was to learn and have a few more weeks to work out issues. She agreed that if there was still room and the messaging could be changed to add more students the two weeks before finals it would be important to do so. By still using the one track plus model, there is more time to work through the protocols for mandatory saliva screening. To go to 100% for the screening participation is particularly important for the two weeks following Winter Break. She also spoke to the logistical pieces and will allow the school to be ready to go to two tracks.

Dr. Sally commented that mandated screening does not alleviate the issues, but rather it obligates the District to solve them. Ms. Ducommun then noted that the intent is to have everyone turn in the test after Winter Break even though the school is still on the one-track model and some students may not be in one week. Mr. Dronen noted that those students with special needs or medical conditions who can not spit should receive an exemption. Dr. Sally noted that the District will partner with those families who are in this position.

Ms. Albrecht summarized that the District will move to the mandatory saliva screening after Winter Break and there will be an appeals process as well as accommodations for students with specific needs. The Board would also like the Superintendent and his administration to work with the Associations to achieve full participation for all employees on campus, to work with that model and the logistics on that also. All Board members agreed that this summary was consistent with their thinking. Ms. Ducommun shared additional comments with Mr. Robitaille noting that the sense of the Board was to move forward on what Ms. Albrecht described. Dr. Sally noted that the District is ready to move forward tomorrow including the direction on the E track messaging. Ms. Ducommun requested that the Board be included on emails so they can be good representatives for the school and answer questions. Dr. Sally apologized that those emails have not been sent to the Board and noted they will receive them from now on.

### **C. 15-year Plan Update: Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Study**

Mr. Johnson began the presentation on the 15-year Plan Update: Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Study. He first thanked the Board for providing time tonight to review a topic the District has been carefully working on for the past year, the analysis of the eastern portion of the Winnetka Campus and how best to meet the needs of

students of today and tomorrow. Mr. Johnson acknowledged that while the District's priority remains safe in-person instruction for students, it has also been working to make sure it continues other work, such as effectively managing its facilities. Tonight, the work of this analysis will be shared, which has been guided by the members of the Facilities Steering Committee (FSC), administration and others. To complete this analysis, the District was fortunate to have a dedicated team of professionals to assist it, from Wight and Co. and their design leader, Mr. Kevin Havens. Mr. Havens was the driving force behind the design of the west side of the campus. He is assisted by Mr. Jason Dwyer, President of Design and Construction, and Mr. Brandon Spoher, project architect. They also partnered with longtime District architect Mr. Steve Cashman, an expert on the details of New Trier facilities. Athletic expertise has been provided by HOK, a design firm that specializes in athletics, and has had success in working to meet student needs particularly in older facilities. The team has also been assisted by Mr. Dave Conway, Director of Physical Plant Services (PPS), Mr. Augie Fontanetta, Athletic Director, Mr. Steve Linke, Facilities Manager at the Winnetka Campus, and Mr. Andy Butler, Kinetic Wellness (KW) Department Chair.

Mr. Johnson went on to share the agenda for the presentation, noting that the focus would be a review of the area of study and possible solutions. He noted that it is important to remind people at the outset that the District is looking at options that can be accomplished with its existing resources and does not require a referendum. The work focuses on how to maintain the community's investment in the facility for the benefit of students and will continue to strengthen the school's academic, athletic and KW needs of students today and tomorrow. It also continues the successful approach the District took on the west side of the campus and the 15-year plan work of the past two years. It will address years of significant underinvestment in this part of the facility. This can be accomplished through the existing resources taxpayers have currently entrusted to the District and allows it to spend the funds on improving the student experience, rather than on continuing and escalating maintenance costs over time. One of the areas of focus is the 1925 Gates Gym. The recent facilities work has been incredibly successful in maintaining and enhancing the campus for the benefit of students. The school is particularly proud of what the west side of the campus has accomplished from an educational, student life and maintenance perspective. This area of the campus is also the easiest to social distance in, which has been beneficial during the pandemic. Mr. Johnson showed some pictures from the west side of the campus. The 15-year plan, which is in its second year after that project, has shown that the school can purposefully and gradually address other areas on the campus. Mr. Johnson provided an example of the newly renovated library at the Northfield campus. He shared further details about the 15-year plan as well.

Mr. Johnson shared about the cost analysis, noting that over the past year, the District has carefully worked on this analysis, including bringing periodic updates to the Board. Although the original expectation was to be at a recommendation point last May, this date was adjusted to focus attention on the pandemic. This has been a careful examination of how the school can meet the needs of students with the resources that are available. One of the most important parts of this work is the needs analysis, but first, Mr. Johnson shared highlights of the different parts of the timeline.

Mr. Fontanetta then went through the needs analysis, noting that the term "East Side of the Winnetka Campus" leads many people to think of only the Gates Gym, when it is the ancillary areas that need the most improvement. He shared the deficiencies of the current facilities. One of the challenges of the east side of the campus is the structure as the spaces are not easily changed. They are small but have been adapted over time to try and meet the needs of students. The KW classrooms are also small and do not have adequate furniture in them. They are also difficult for students to get to, with one classroom not accessible to those with disabilities or a student who may be on crutches. The Gates Gym was only built for singular events and does not meet the needs of today. Another area of focus was the strength and conditioning space which lacks enough room for all the athletes to use who need to each day. In order to access the weight training areas, students and athletes must walk through classes or other practices. The indoor track, where close to 400 students are on the boys and girls track teams, is cramped and unsafe. The track is an odd distance and not the minimum standard. There are also columns in that space and two weight cages in the lower level. The space is also not optimal for visitors to the Winnetka campus, and Mr. Fontanetta shared inadequacies related to that. The cost to maintain these facilities is significant. The maintenance would not provide direct benefits to students or programs and would be costly. Maintenance has also been deferred in these areas, some for over 25 years. Mr. Fontanetta displayed pictures of various areas noting their challenges. He also shared pictures of KW classrooms and noted the issues those face.

Mr. Johnson then shared pictures of the exterior including the 1920s unused boiler plant. He noted that Trevian Way has set the boundary on the north side of the campus. One achievement over the past several years has been decommissioning the 1970s boilers, as hot water boilers have been added to the rest of the campus improving the heating and cooling for staff and students. Those boilers now only power the old radiators that are in the Gates Gym.

Mr. Johnson shared the peer district comparisons, noting that the District has carefully analyzed facilities at neighboring districts in order to understand how they serve their students. The District's work is guided on making the best decisions for the community and students, but this analysis helps it to understand how other districts meet their students' needs. The school has one of the largest athletic and KW programs, but one of the most antiquated facilities, with out of date gyms, other facilities and classrooms. Most of the schools were either constructed well after the Gates Gym and associated spaces or have been through multiple cycles of remodeling. Mr. Johnson went on to share additional information and pictures of other schools' facilities.

Mr. Johnson then introduced Mr. Havens from Wight & Co. who spoke about the area of study and analysis that was done. The goal was to have an open process with no preconceived notions. Mr. Havens provided a brief outline of the five options, options for further consideration, and the scope of the campus that is being considered. Mr. Havens then shared Option A, noting that this keeps the space mostly the way it is with some improvements, but does not have the considerations that Mr. Fontanetta provided earlier regarding student programming. Option B would contain all the changes in Option A, and keep the Gates Gym, but expand it to the north. This would mean that the boiler house would need to be kept intact. He shared additional information about this option. Option C would remove the Gates Gym and construct a new athletic and KW facility. This option would remove the boiler plant. Mr. Havens went on to share additional details. Next, was Option C2, which is fundamentally everything that Mr. Havens described in Option C, but with two additional pieces. The track in Option C would be four lanes (not regulation for the number of heats required in a meet) and regulation length, while the track in Option C2 would be six lanes and at regulation length. Another benefit to the six-lane track is it allows the space above it to be slightly larger as well. Option C2 would also allow for the building of a third story which would be all academic classrooms. Option D would remove everything and rebuild from scratch. Finally, Option E would remove everything, which would also include the Bickert Gym, and would fundamentally be starting over again. This could be done in phases but would come at a significant investment. Mr. Havens then shared the comparison scorecard which puts the options into a rating system. Next a chart was displayed that showed the subtle variation between Option C and C2. Mr. Havens noted that this is a middle level investment, but with much improvement. Mr. Johnson reiterated that the group wanted to look at all options, but it was quickly realized that while Option E would be wonderful, it does not make financial sense and Options A and B, would reduce maintenance needs, but would not bring significant benefits to students. Mr. Johnson shared other rationale for getting to this middle point.

The District has been carefully studying how to make this work within existing resources that taxpayers have entrusted the school with. Mr. Johnson reiterated it does not include a referendum to issue bonds. The finance plan involves using three potential funding sources, all of which use the existing tax levy, reserves and models that are common both at New Trier and other districts. The three components are a judicious use of reserves, bonds paid by our existing operating budget in a fixed amount of debt service each year, and debt service extension base bonds. This has been reviewed by the FSC as well. More information will be brought to the Board in 2021.

Next, Mr. Johnson introduced Mr. Dwyer who gave a brief overview of the timeline if the decision is made in February to continue the project. He noted that the schematic design phase is wrapping up where good detail has been added to Options C & C2. Based on the direction from the Board, the next phase would be design development, which would begin in February and go until June of 2021. At the end of this phase, an independent estimate is conducted. Construction documents in preparation for bidding packages are moved forward from June until December of 2021. Construction activities would start in December, totaling around 18 to 20 months. This includes demolition activities, new construction and turnover when the facility would be ready for occupancy in August of 2023.

Mr. Johnson reminded everyone that this is not an action item tonight but is a recap of the work that has been done for the past year. It also allows for a chance to make sure everyone is on the same page as people have been engaged at different points. Mr. Johnson shared upcoming plans are such as engaging with neighbors and key stakeholders. A Committee of the Whole Meeting for the Board of Education is scheduled for January 11<sup>th</sup>. No action will be taken at this meeting, but it will be an opportunity to dig into details and answer questions. Mr. Johnson also mentioned that now is a historically low interest rate environment. He also noted that the number of parking spaces will remain the same and the District will work within the boundaries of Essex Road and Trevian Way. It is also important to respect the community's investment in the facility and create a unified campus aesthetic. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen asked Mr. Havens to confirm that one of the main differences in Option C2 is an increase of 13,000 square feet on the three levels of the building, to which Mr. Havens confirmed.

Mr. Robitaille inquired of Mr. Dronen, who sits on the FSC, what the committee's recommendation is between Option C and C2. Mr. Dronen replied that the committee is open for discussion but has focused on C2 due to the six-lane track and additional eight classrooms. Mr. Dronen noted it was a cost issue, which led to Mr. Robitaille's next question about cost estimates. Mr. Johnson responded that the options being looked at fall within the \$60 to \$75 million dollar range. Dr. Sally stated the goal of the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting would be to discuss different options and the cost.

Mr. Robitaille inquired if Wight has done internal renderings like what was done for the west side project. Several Board members noted the renderings are beautifully done and Mr. Robitaille asked if they could be shared at the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ms. Hahn asked to hear more about the environmental impact and benefits of the various options at the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ms. Albrecht asked to see the incrementals when reviewing the cost out for the options.

Mr. McLane shared his perspective about deciding on an option.

Mr. Robitaille noted that the timeline eliminates the 2022 indoor athletic season and suggested that a way be found to lose only one season and not two. Mr. Johnson replied that more options will be brought to the January meeting that focuses on the student experience. The District looks to make a similar commitment that it did with the west side project by preserving opportunities for students. Ms. Ducommun commented that the District anticipates it would still have a basketball or volleyball season, which Mr. Johnson confirmed. Mr. Fontanetta shared additional comments. Mr. Johnson reiterated that the school will not lose a season. Mr. Fontanetta noted that the gym at the Northfield campus would be utilized and the athletic program would still be able to host home events.

Ms. Ducommun noted that there is a sensitivity to interest costs and construction costs and would like to see how the District would think about that going forward. Mr. Johnson noted that he will provide information on this next month.

Ms. Albrecht noted the timeline and the February decision. Mr. Johnson stated that the District wants to make sure it is being responsive and giving the Board the information it needs. The meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup> will provide many details including financing. There would be further discussion at the regular Board meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup>, with a decision at the regular February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. Dronen asked to discuss what may be done with the additional classroom space in Option C2 at the next meeting as well as potential savings by not building classrooms in other areas of the building. He posed a similar request to Mr. Tragos regarding what could be done academically. Mr. Tragos agreed that all spaces are learning spaces and there is an opportunity for all areas of the school to benefit from the classrooms. Ms. Albrecht commented that with the 15-year plan, there would be a hiatus for some of the Tower building renovations, but the plan is to make modern, functional classrooms in that space over time. Mr. Johnson confirmed this and shared additional comments around this. Ms. Albrecht went on to inquire about the classroom need, which Mr. Johnson replied would be brought to the January meeting.

Ms. Albrecht inquired about the pool and if it would continue to function as is. Mr. Johnson replied to her inquiry, noting the pool at Winnetka will continue to be maintained, as well as shared comments about the Northfield campus pool.

Ms. Ducommun inquired if there will be a full accounting of the trade-offs of the four-lane track versus the six-lane track, which was confirmed. Ms. Albrecht attended the tours of peer schools' athletic facilities and New Trier's indoor is the weakest one. She also asked for a comparison of peer schools and their indoor tracks.

Mr. Johnson noted that a public, virtual format for the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting is being considered so all parties can participate. The District is also open to figuring out tours for certain groups in a safe manner.

#### **D. Profile of the Class of 2020**

Mr. Tragos presented the Profile of the Class of 2020 which falls within the Strategic Planning framework of Intellectual Growth, Engagement and Readiness. He provided highlights, also noting that this report is one aspect of a much larger and holistic high school experience. The Class of 2020 spent the last quarter of their high school career learning remotely, though Mr. Tragos does not see much of that reflected in this report but anticipates seeing more of its impact in future class profiles. He explained the purpose of the profile, which contains data on the course-taking patterns, college matriculation and post-high school pathways. The data set includes 924 students who were at New Trier for all four years of high school, even though there were 1,002 graduates in the Class of 2020.

Mr. Tragos spoke of the course-taking patterns for the core academics, noting that four to five academic courses are recommended per year; 65% of students took 19 or more of these courses. Almost 13% of students took 20 or more core academic courses, this percentage has been steadily rising over the past three years. He then went on to share the course-taking patterns for elective courses, with 61.6% of students taking two to four elective courses. 24.4% of students took between four and a half and eight electives, which is more than one course per year and is the second consecutive year with an increase. 94% of freshmen took an elective. The course-taking patterns demonstrate the fluidity and flexibility of the level system. Students take a mix of levels over the course of their four years. He noted that the number of students taking only level 4 courses throughout their four years is only 4.95% while those students only taking level 2 courses was 2.7%. The percentage of students taking a mixture of levels has increased over the past three years for a variety of reasons. Mr. Tragos noted that over 92% of students take a mix of levels.

He also discussed the number of students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses. He then shared the tables of College Matriculation, explaining that they show the various colleges that at least five or more of the graduates of the Class of 2020 are attending. The charts do not include the larger number of those who were accepted to these schools. The tables show a variety of information by level profile, the number of AP courses taken, among others. It is important to note that this information is not a prescription of how to get into these schools, but does give the school, students, families, community and Board a sense of the profile of the students who are attending these universities.

Finally, Mr. Tragos noted that the last section of the report was included for the first time and focused on multiple post-high school pathways as that was a goal within this particular strategic plan framework. There is less data in this section and is one that will need to be built out. This goal is in alignment with state and national trends towards career readiness. These readiness indicators will soon be included on the state's school report card as part of the school's accountability. He shared additional details around this, noting that it can seem as though college is the only post-high school pathway, which is not the case. The school is working to make sure that students and parents are informed and prepared for multiple pathways. Students from the Class of 2020 went on to pursue other opportunities as well such as a GAP year, internship, military service, technical school and employment.

Mr. Tragos shared that the national news around college matriculation during Covid is quite discouraging. The National Student Clearinghouse issued a report last week noting that 22% fewer high school graduates went straight to college after graduation. It is a significant number and there are sharp declines among particular socio-economic populations in the country, but there was a decline among all students. Illinois colleges and universities saw a 7% decline with Illinois community colleges seeing a 14% drop. Mr. Tragos noted that the District's goal about planning for multiple pathways is rightly set as there are many opportunities available to students. He then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen inquired if the District knew how many students took college deferments this year, to which Mr. Tragos replied it is about 30 students. He broke that number down, while also noting that a story is not known about each student in that particular grouping.

Ms. Albrecht noted her takeaway from the report is that 92% of students take courses across levels and went on to share additional thoughts as well.

#### **E. Annual Plan 2020-2021: Equity Update**

Dr. Hayes presented the Annual Plan 2020-2021: Equity Plan. He began by sharing about X block seminars and how they originated. The plan was to have four seminars throughout the year with over 100 adult volunteers who would have worked with students on a variety of topics. This has been postponed until next year so as to devote energy to hybrid learning. This year the focus will instead be on "The Power of Language" lesson. Freshmen will participate in the lesson, while sophomores, juniors and seniors will take part in lessons built on what they learned last year.

The Affinity Groups have met throughout the year and are engaged in making sure that the school has the groups in place on both campuses that students are interested in. The groups have also focused on another goal from the work over the summer and that is to expand student leadership opportunities. There has also been a reconfiguration of Student Voices in Equity to more of a leadership-focused organization as well as some expansion of Affinity Groups.

Departments continue to be dedicated to their work on equity goals despite facing many challenges right now. Dr. Hayes provided examples of this work.

Regarding restorative justice practice work, a training was provided for adviser chairs as well as others who are interested in thinking about how these practices could be implemented in the school. Restorative justice is more than discipline, it is about the culture of a school and how New Trier may pursue this and make the shift to its culture and thinking.

For equity professional development, the school is pursuing the recommendation from the summer which was more of a tiered approach. This will allow for multiple entry points for staff members.

Finally, there has been thinking around an equity audit such as what the school needs to know to investigate this and how might it talk with other Districts who have engaged in this work. Dr. Hayes then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Hahn asked for a refresher on the concept of the X Block Seminar Days, to which Dr. Hayes shared the proposal as well as additional details for these days. Ms. Hahn then noted that it seemed that the equity professional development programs are optional for staff and inquired how it is messaged to staff that the District would like them to participate. Dr. Hayes responded that the District wants it to be a cultural expectation for staff and shared other thoughts around this.

Mr. Robitaille shared that the overriding goal for equity was to create a more inclusive environment within the building so that students and staff had a better understanding and that staff and students of color would feel more included in the New Trier experience. He shared his concerns about some of the items in the memo veering away from the student focus and toward white shame or guilt. Dr. Hayes responded that the idea for the white antiracist group is not for promotion of white shame or guilt. There are a number of white students who have said they see students of color who are their classmates that are having a hard time fitting in and want to know how they can be an ally for their classmates. He went on to share further details. Mr. Robitaille responded that some of the language in the memo seems different than what Dr. Hayes just shared. He went on to share that the details matter in terms of executing the goal of creating a more inclusive environment. Dr. Sally responded to Mr. Robitaille's comments, noting that the goal should go beyond the belonging part for students of color by making sure all students are ready to go out into the world prepared to tackle issues and that they have thought through different perspectives while in high school. Dr. Sally also noted that the goal of this update on equity is to make sure the District stays aligned in what interests the Board and what interests the staff in terms of moving forward. Conversation continued between Dr. Sally and Mr. Robitaille.

Mr. McLane then inquired if there was another forum to pursue this as it is an important topic, but it was getting late into the evening. After further discussion, Dr. Sally shared that he would speak with Dr. Hayes as well as others in the school who have been working on this. They will come up with a plan along with Ms. Albrecht and Dr. Glucksman to talk through details and help inform the Board about the ideas, the motivation behind them and the anticipated outcome making sure it matches what it is being discussed. Mr. Dronen then shared about the chart in the strategic plan that outlines equity goals noting equity is about all students. Ms. Hahn agreed that it is important to understand the details, as going back to Ms. Ducommun's point, Board members are asked about this in the community and they need to support what is being done so it is a worthwhile conversation. It is inclusivity in preparing students, but also making sure that students are accessing their education and reaching their full potential. She gave the example of Mr. Tragos' chart and inquired if the school is tracking how those distributions are across racial, gender and socio-economic. She posed the question if students are being held back because of some other issues within the school.

Ms. Albrecht stated that the Board needs to know how it evaluates these programs, so they know if they are successful.

## **F. Summer School Report**

Mr. Scott Williams, Assistant Principal for Student Services, and Mr. Mike Lee, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services presented the summer school report. Mr. Williams began by noting that the summer allowed for an opportunity to try different things that have been implemented for the current school year. Adjustments had to be made to the academic and enrichment programs as well as athletic programming due to Covid.

Mr. Mike Lee, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services, then shared data for summer school 2020. Total enrollment and the number of students participating increased significantly. There were 3,061 total students enrolled this year as compared to 2,070 for summer school 2019. This summer required a lot of pivoting as students and their families plans changed. Mr. Lee went on to share other data, noting that while the sophomore class was the largest class to participate, it was the junior class that had the most significant increase. The belief is that this was due to the sections of consumer seminar classes that were offered as well as the sections of civics.

Mr. Williams encouraged the Board to review the financials. He then went on to briefly share about summer school 2021. A review is underway for various options for next summer as Mr. Tragos has engaged department leaders on this. Enrollment for summer school 2021 will begin in February. Mr. Williams noted there may be a pause in athletic programming registration given the uncertainty of the mandates from the Illinois High School Association (IHSAA) for the state. He then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Ducommun shared that it was remarkable that Mr. Williams and Mr. Lee were able to pivot and open as many classes as they were able to. She suspects next summer may be similar pivots and changes. Ms. Ducommun inquired about the state guidelines that necessitated athletic programming begin after academic programming, noting parents have been asking for this for years so students could take part in both, to which Mr. Williams responded by clarifying the piece about athletic programming and IHSAA guidelines. Conversation continued between the two. There was a shift to the afternoon for athletic programming as the academic and enrichment programs had already been developed for the morning. For summer school 2021, athletic programming will return to its usual timing. Ms. Ducommun inquired if it had to return to that way, to which Mr. Williams shared that it is something that could be discussed administratively.

Mr. McLane shared that a remarkable job was done of being responsive and quick in determining what students wanted to take and how they could be accommodated. Remote education principles also evolved through the summer program as well. He noted that it was remarkable given the pressure and circumstances and thanked Mr. Williams and Mr. Lee for their work. Mr. Lee responded that it was a good team effort as there were many people assisting.

## **VII. Administrative Items**

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

Mr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for November 2020 which is the fifth month of the year and although it is only the third month of the school year, the District is getting a sense in terms of direction. The fund balance for all accounts is \$116,233,807. The weighted portfolio yield for interest dropped to .38 basis points for short term and 1.38% for long term. The short-term rates continue to hold steady or decrease slightly. The weighted average for long-term rates is dropping as investments in the District's three-year ladder are maturing. The District continues to see strong local and state payments. The tax extension for 2020 is 98% collected, which is great to see after the delay that was offered to property taxpayers.

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

Mr. Johnson presented the Financial Reports for November 2020. Operating revenue was \$51,243,341 for the first five months of the fiscal year, or 2.27% lower compared to last year. Other Local sources, such as students' fees, buses, parking, among others, continue to be considerably lower. The District has adjusted those fees so that people are only paying for services they are using, but that in turn leads to a temporary decrease in collection for this year. The adopted budget for operating revenue is slightly higher. Operating expenditures were \$42,983,000, including transfers, through November, or 0.21% lower than last year. The overall expenditures are closely in line with last year, although there are some variances with the largest being in supplies as the District prepared to welcome people back to school by ensuring it had the proper personal protective equipment and other supplies. The adopted budget for operating expenditures is 2.58% higher than last year.

Mr. Robitaille inquired where the offsets were occurring, noting that despite Covid, the District is spending at essentially the same rate as it did last year. Mr. Johnson verified that Mr. Robitaille was looking at the Education Fund in terms of categories for instruction, which Mr. Robitaille confirmed. Mr. Johnson then went through a couple

of the variances providing further detail on each. Mr. Johnson inquired if Mr. Robitaille was looking for the substantial decreases, to which Mr. Robitaille replied that he would have expected the expenses year-to-date, compared to a non-Covid period in the prior year, to be lower. Mr. Johnson directed Mr. Robitaille to page nine of the report and spoke to the information on that page.

**\*C. Resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$4,200,000 General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds of the District for the purpose of increasing the Working Cash Fund of the District, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof**

Mr. Johnson provided a brief summary as this has been discussed at several prior Board meetings. In May, the Board approved the second-year work of the District's 15-year plan that will occur in the summer of 2021. Projects include completing the third floor of the Winnetka Campus, classroom renovations at the Northfield Campus, along with various other improvements. The project will be partially funded by the issuance of these general obligation working cash fund bonds. The Finance Committee has reviewed this issue many times, while the Board needs to take three steps to authorize it. The final step is to pass a parameters resolution which allows the District to sell that debt. As discussed previously at the Finance Committee, the belief is that this will be a public sale, as due to current market conditions, it will yield the best value for the District and its taxpayers. This would take place either in January or the District may wait and do it later with potentially some other work if it moves forward.

Mr. Robitaille moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board of Education adopts the Resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$4,200,000 General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds of the District for the purpose of increasing the Working Cash Fund of the District, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof. 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, November 1 – 30, 2020
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Leaves of Absence and Retirement)
- 2020 Final Audit Reports

Ms. Albrecht inquired if any members wanted to pull an item off the Consent Agenda, no one chose to do so. Ms. Hahn moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: Bill List for the Period, November 1 – 30, 2020, Personnel Report (Appointments, Leaves of Absence and Retirement) and Addendum, and the 2020 Final Audit Reports. Mr. Robitaille 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 reported that he and Mr. McLane attended the **Facilities Steering Committee** on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, and whose work was covered earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Dronen reported that the **NSSD Leadership Council** met on December 9<sup>th</sup>. They are on an adaptive pause and Septran, the transportation provider, has requested that member districts support their business during this pause by paying a percentage of normal transportation costs. This action would allow Septran to keep drivers and staff in preparation for transportation needs upon resuming shortly after Winter Break. Districts can submit this cost with their annual Illinois state transportation claim and maintain their ability to recoup up to 80% of these costs. Covid is having an impact on the 2021 budget coupled with a declining enrollment in programs and services. Mr. Dronen and Mr. Johnson will review offline the impact, if any, this has on New Trier.

Mr. McLane shared that there may be an opportunity to get the **Community Engagement Committee** resurrected as there are new items coming up, such the east side of the Winnetka campus proposal as well as reporting for reopening.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following:

- It is the last week before Winter Break.
- On December 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>, performing arts will present “It’s a Wonderful Life – Live Radio Show.”
- Dance Ensemble will stream and be available for viewing.
- Mandatory Saliva Screening will begin on January 4<sup>th</sup>, after Winter Break when school resumes and communication will be sent to families this week.
- There are several usual meetings at the beginning of January such as facilities, finance, RAB and New Trier Fine Arts Association. Dr. Sally encouraged reviewing the calendar for these.
- The next Board of Education meeting is on Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> as Monday is Martin Luther King Day.

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

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Ducommun moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, to adjourn. 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.

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathleen Albrecht, President