To commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity.

Board of Education

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A Letter from the District 203 Board of Education President

New Trier High School has been a treasure within our community since 1901. We on the Board of Education are proud to represent you, our taxpayers, as we work to protect and nurture this asset in the most responsible and responsive way.

We reached out to every New Trier Township household in 2010 with a detailed mail survey seeking your thoughts about the direction of the school, its curriculum, its extracurricular programs, and its facilities. Your thoughtful responses have guided the Board of Education’s research and decision-making in the years since.

Soon we will be asking for your help again as we seek further guidance from you about our facilities. In 2010, you spoke loudly and clearly in rejecting a proposed $174 million referendum for a major rebuilding project on both sides of our Winnetka Campus. You said the project was too large, too expensive, and presented at the wrong time given the economic conditions.

We listened, and we have continued to listen as we studied solutions to address deficiencies in buildings that are 60 to more than 100 years old. Now we are examining the possibility of a far smaller project that would replace three of our oldest buildings on one side of the campus with new spaces that would better meet our students’ 21st century academic needs, provide accessibility for people with disabilities, and increase energy efficiency.

We will not move forward, though, until we believe the community can support such a plan. That is why your input and participation are so important. On the back of this report, you will find information about a Feb. 10 Special Board of Education meeting to hear different architectural design teams’ potential solutions for a smaller, targeted Winnetka Campus project. In addition, we will hold a series of tours and public meetings in the coming months and once again survey the community to get your feedback.

The goal of this Board of Education is to make decisions about New Trier High School with the community, not for the community. The seven Board members are residents of New Trier Township just as you are, and we encourage you to help us make decisions that will keep New Trier High School as a hallmark of this community forever.

Thank you for your support of New Trier High School.

Sincerely,

Alan R. Dolinko
Board President

A Letter from the District 203 Superintendent

Working at New Trier High School carries with it a sense of pride. Our leaders, teachers, and staff members take pride in the work they do at our two campuses, and they are proud to be a part of an institution that is so well-regarded both within its own community and across the country.

I am proud, too – proud to share with you our achievements during 2013, including our students’ exceptional academic performance, our steady financial management on behalf of New Trier Township taxpayers, and our commitment to serving every child in this community with a high-quality individualized experience.

Within these pages you will find articles on academics, the District 203 budget, potential plans for our facilities, our Mobile Learning Initiative, and our dedication to social and emotional learning. I hope these articles give you a glimpse into the many ways in which we strive to make New Trier High School a place where all students can learn, grow, and explore their interests as they prepare for adulthood.

I also hope this report can help correct some misconceptions about New Trier, including that students who aren’t at the very top in grades or athletic ability somehow get lost in a school as large as ours. We have spent the last four years studying the course-taking patterns, extracurricular participation, service activities, and college choices of each graduating class to discover the facts behind this common myth.

What we have found is that New Trier students outperform their peers at all levels, go on to competitive colleges of their choosing, and participate in extracurricular activities at an extremely high rate. It is part of New Trier’s mission to assure that every student can find a place to fit in, connect with others, and learn at an appropriate pace.

While I may be proud of our curriculum, extracurricular programs, and athletic achievements, I am most proud of the feedback we receive from our graduates, who tell us that their four years at New Trier prepared them well for whatever path they decided to take after high school.

Sincerely,

Dr. Linda L. Yonke
Superintendent
New Trier High School has a well-earned reputation for academic excellence, both in Illinois and across the country. New Trier students consistently post the highest average ACT scores in the state, and New Trier alumni are leaders in fields from business and medicine to public service and performing arts.

Ask how New Trier students perform so well, though, and you will hear plenty of myths. Among them: that most students fill their schedule with only the highest level of coursework, that they must sacrifice electives they love for core academic classes, or that they must take AP classes to excel on the ACT exam.

For the past four years, New Trier has studied the course-taking patterns, college choices, and extracurricular and service activities of each graduating senior class to separate the myths from the facts. Those facts paint a very different picture of the success of New Trier students.

In reality, most students take a mix of course levels, stick to the recommended 4 to 5 core academic courses a year, and outperform their peers across the country on the ACT even if they never took an AP course during high school. In addition, New Trier students at all levels show growth from their sophomore to junior year on ACT-administered exams at a rate that far exceeds the national average.

Throughout its history, New Trier has offered a comprehensive, rigorous curriculum for students of all ability levels. Courses are offered in four groupings: 2-level (college preparatory); 3-level (honors); 4-level (high honors, including all AP courses); and 9-level (classes with a mixture of students in the levels 2, 3 and 4). The purpose of the level system is to provide students with the best and most individualized learning experience possible.

Only 4 percent of the Class of 2013 took all 4-level courses. The most popular choices were a mix of 3- and 4-level (46 percent) and a mix of 2- and 3-level (30 percent). New Trier students went on to college at a rate of 98 percent, with Big Ten universities among the most popular choices for students at all levels of coursework.

The Class of 2013 also took advantage of the school’s many clubs and sports, participated in service projects that helped families from Haiti to Waukegan, and achieved the state’s highest composite ACT score for a public open enrollment school.
LOST IN THE MIDDLE: ANOTHER NEW TRIER MYTH

Question: I’ve heard that students who are at the top of their class, along with those who need special education services, do great at New Trier. But in a school with 4,200 students, that leaves a lot of kids “in the middle.” Don’t they get lost?

Answer: This is probably the most common myth about New Trier. It’s understandable. How can such a large high school provide an individual experience for every student? That is New Trier’s goal, and one that is achieved in many ways. They include:

- **The adviser program:** New Trier’s nationally recognized student advisement system provides a small-school atmosphere within a large school of outstanding opportunities. The same group of about 25 students meets daily throughout all four years of high school. Faculty advisers provide academic and personal guidance for students.

- **The level system:** New Trier offers a rigorous curriculum for all students. Different levels of coursework allow students to work at the pace most appropriate for them. New Trier students who take all levels of coursework generally outperform their peers across the country and attend competitive colleges of their choosing.

- **Individualized assistance:** Students who need extra help in some subjects but do not require special education services can take advantage of one of New Trier’s many individualized assistance programs, including peer and faculty tutoring, the Academic Assistance Center, the Guided Assistance Program, and Response to Intervention services.

- **Post-High School Counseling:** From sophomore through senior year, post-high school counselors work to help students identify, plan for, and pursue their passions after graduation. Individual counseling sessions begin in the junior year.

- **Student clubs:** One of the advantages of attending a big school is that students can find groups of like-minded friends who share an interest in everything from service activities to video games to poetry. With more than 150 clubs, New Trier makes sure every student has a place to fit in.

- **Extracurricular opportunities:** New Trier offers intramural teams, performing arts opportunities, and 35 interscholastic sports throughout the school year. No-cut sports are offered each season, and many sports carry multiple team levels. Performing Arts also offers no-cut theatre opportunities, and theatre productions that require auditions are double-cast.

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**ACT DATA CLASS OF 2013**

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<th></th>
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<tr>
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<td>----</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composite</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>20.9</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

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**ACT RESULTS FOR NON-AP STUDENTS:**

**English:**
- Students who finished senior year in 3-level English averaged 28.3 in English.
- All non-AP English students averaged 27.0 in English.

**Math:**
- Students who finished senior year in 3-level Pre-Calculus averaged 27.9 in Math.
- All non-AP Math students averaged 25.2 in Math.

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**ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMINATIONS**

AP exams are scored 1-5, and 3 is the typical score needed to receive college credit or placement.

95 percent of the 551 New Trier seniors who took AP exams in 2013 received 3 or better.
New Trier Goes Mobile:  
Students, Teachers Applaud iPads

Imagine a backpack loaded with textbooks, a video camera, an audio recorder, scientific measurement tools, a datebook, notebooks, and an assignment keeper. Now imagine that backpack weighs just about a pound.

Beginning next school year, every New Trier student will carry a small but powerful device that serves all of those purposes and more: an iPad.

New Trier is in the third year of a Mobile Learning Initiative that will expand to all students in 2014-2015. This school year, about 2,300 students are enrolled in courses that require an iPad.

The goal of the program is to see how mobile devices, already so popular with high school students, can enhance the teaching and learning experience. In the first two years of the program, teachers submitted applications explaining how they would use iPads in their classrooms, and students assigned to those courses became a part of the pilot.

The District has used the pilot years to extensively study the program, including how teachers and students use the devices and how to minimize distractions while maximizing creative use of iPads. The response from both students and teachers has been overwhelmingly positive.

Some examples of iPad use in and out of the classroom include:

- Using probes and apps to collect and analyze data in science courses
- Creating video travel brochures in Spanish classes that help the students practice their speaking and writing skills while learning about Spanish culture
- Recording and analyzing personal workout progress, heart rate, and other data using trainer apps in physical education classes
- Organizing homework and receiving teacher feedback in all courses

One common misconception is that the Mobile Learning Initiative is merely an e-textbook program. While e-books are often a part of an iPad course, the program’s focus is on how iPads can be used to bolster the overall learning experience. Not every lesson or course will incorporate iPads, although the pilot research shows that students still will benefit from the devices’ organizational and note-taking tools.

New Trier families share the cost of iPads with the District. This year, the District subsidized $270 of the cost of new iPads, keyboards, apps and other accessories, with families paying the remainder or choosing to supply their own device.

Since e-books generally cost far less than standard textbooks, the District expects students will save as much or more on textbook purchases over their four years at New Trier as the amount paid for an iPad. Based on parent feedback, New Trier continues to study the best financing plan for families.

DID YOU KNOW?

New Trier High School has been named an Apple Distinguished School for 2013-2015. Apple awards this designation to schools that “demonstrate an innovative and compelling learning environment that engages students and provides tangible evidence of academic accomplishment.”
Social and Emotional Learning: Teaching Students Life Skills

Schools are expected to teach students to read and write well, solve difficult math problems, and understand scientific theories. But what about teaching students to cope with failure, speak up for themselves, or manage their time?

New Trier Township High School District 203 and all six Township elementary school districts believe that both academic and life skills preparation are essential in assuring a student’s future success. Now the districts are working together to share best practices in giving students these practical skills – a process often referred to as Social and Emotional Learning.

Social and Emotional Learning includes teaching students how to form healthy relationships, make responsible decisions, and strive toward concrete goals, among other skills. A leading organization dedicated to this type of learning, CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), notes that extensive research ties high-quality Social and Emotional Learning programs to academic achievement and success beyond high school.

CASEL defines five core competencies for students that are the focus of good programs. They are:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Responsible Decision-Making
- Relationship Skills
- Social Awareness

New Trier and the six Township elementary districts all have programs dedicated to these areas, though they may differ in approach and content.

This February, faculty and staff from every public school district in New Trier Township will come to New Trier’s Winnetka Campus for a Township Institute Day focused on sharing their experiences with Social and Emotional Learning. Sian Beilock, a psychology professor at the University of Chicago, is the keynote speaker. She has researched the brain science behind why skilled people sometimes perform poorly in high-pressure situations and wrote a book on that topic, *Choke: What the Secrets of the Brain Reveal About Getting It Right When You Have To*. Beilock also will give a talk open to the entire New Trier Township community that evening.

After the keynote, faculty and staff will attend breakout sessions led by colleagues and experts on topics as varied as student motivation, the importance of nutrition and physical fitness, and the struggles college deans see among their students.

New Trier reaffirmed its commitment to Social and Emotional Learning in its last Strategic Plan and continues to offer programs and groups dedicated to reducing stress levels, developing meaningful relationships, and promoting a healthy, balanced life for both students and staff.
Imagine watching a television built in 1957, using a rotary phone constructed in 1960, driving a car manufactured in 1950, cooking dinner in a kitchen built in 1934, or conducting a science experiment in a lab designed in 1931.

Almost everything about our homes, transportation, communication, research – and what we know about teaching and learning – has changed dramatically in recent years. Yet our Winnetka Campus students are still using classrooms that were built in 1928, 1931, 1934, 1950, and 1957, most of which have not been renovated since they were constructed.

For the past four years, New Trier has researched and sought community feedback on solutions to help bring our aging Winnetka Campus buildings in line with 21st Century teaching and learning.

A 2010 referendum sought to modernize a large portion of the campus, including both academic classrooms and fitness and athletic facilities. Community members rejected that $174 million proposal, deeming it too large, too expensive, and presented at the wrong time, given the state of the economy.

The District and Board of Education have spent the four years since researching – and listening. Now New Trier is asking the community for feedback as it considers a smaller, less expensive solution that would replace three adjacent buildings from 1912, 1931, and 1950 with a new, modern facility. This proposal would NOT include a new gym, field house, fitness facilities, or underground parking.

The Board of Education will hold a special meeting on Feb. 10 to hear from three architectural design teams with ideas on how to replace those buildings. All community members are invited. The Board may then select one design team, and the public will be invited to a series of public meetings and tours to offer their opinions on that team’s potential solution.

The Board has made it clear that any plan must be much smaller and cost significantly less than the 2010 proposal. The District is also considering financing options that would reduce the total cost to taxpayers even further.

The most important part of this process involves New Trier’s community members. The District will be sending out information about upcoming public meetings and tours, and we encourage you to offer your feedback throughout this process to help create and refine any future proposal.
WHAT HAS NEW TRIER DONE REGARDING FACILITIES SINCE 2010?

It has now been nearly four years since the unsuccessful 2010 referendum proposal. These are some of the actions the Board and the District have taken on facilities since then:

- **Community engagement:** All 25,000 New Trier Township households received a mail survey in 2010, and an independent firm analyzed the results. They found that while many community members agreed that New Trier facilities needed improvement, the $174 million plan was too big, too costly, and proposed at the wrong time. The District’s Community Engagement Committee has reached out to community groups and continues to organize meetings, tours, and other ways for the public to give input on facilities.

- **Northfield Campus improvements:** The District used Life-Safety money and existing funds to reopen a Northfield Campus building that had been leased. The new building eased space across the campus and allowed for the creation of some modern classrooms in that building.

- **Facilities research:** In the Summer of 2011, New Trier committees presented the Board of Education with a number of reports meant to address the top facilities questions and concerns identified by community members in the 2010 New Trier Community Survey. These included a study of the 1:3 freshman/upperclassman campus model, reports on the use of land and fields at both campuses and at off-campus facilities, and research on ADA accessibility. The Facilities Steering Committee also has continued to meet regularly since 2010 to look at facilities options.

- **ADA improvements:** In 2013, the Board of Education agreed to make improvements at both campuses to increase accessibility for people with disabilities. These improvements include auditorium ramps, an elevator serving the Gates Gymnasium at the Winnetka Campus, and accessible bathrooms on both campuses. The west side of the Winnetka Campus will still include many inaccessible areas unless a larger plan to address those buildings moves forward.

- **New Winnetka Campus proposal:** During discussions about ADA accessibility, the Facilities Steering Committee determined that it would be difficult or impossible to make necessary improvements in some older buildings on the Winnetka Campus. The committee recommended exploring a plan that would replace three of the oldest buildings on that campus – the 1912 Cafeteria, 1931 Tech Arts Building, and 1950 Music Building – with a new building containing academic and elective classrooms.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- **Design team presentations:** The Board of Education will hold a public meeting on Monday, Feb. 10, to hear presentations from three architectural design teams about possible solutions for the Winnetka Campus. All community members are invited. Details can be found on the back cover of this report.

- **Design team selection:** Following input from the public and Board of Education, the Facilities Steering Committee will recommend one design team to develop its plan to present to the public.

- **Public meetings and tours:** The District will hold a series of public meetings in the community and invite residents to tour the Winnetka Campus as it seeks feedback on a potential facilities proposal.

- **Board consideration:** The District and Board will weigh all the community feedback to determine whether to present a facilities proposal to the public for approval.
In Illinois, school funding relies heavily on local property taxes. New Trier Township High School District 203 receives 96 percent of its funds from local sources, with more than 91 percent coming from local property taxes.

The District is fortunate to have a community that is so invested in its high school. In return, New Trier wants to assure its taxpayers that it is investing their money wisely. Families move to this District because of its excellent schools, and property values in part reflect the value community members place on education.

A top priority for the Board of Education and the District is to find ways to provide one of the best public high school programs in the country while keeping costs in check. New Trier has achieved this goal over the past several years through strong financial management, including:

- **Cost containment:** The District set up a committee at the outset of the national economic downturn to identify ways to reduce costs without affecting students’ educational experience. Savings in staffing, energy efficiency, technology, printing, and meeting and conference costs continue as a result of the committee’s recommendations.

- **Staffing and salaries:** The District and its employee associations have worked together to approve fair contracts that recognize the challenges of the current economy. Staffing levels have been kept flat in most areas to assure balanced budgets.

- **Savings:** District 203 traditionally puts a portion of its budget in reserve each year to provide a safety net for the District to keep offering its programs and services even if unanticipated expenses occur. Many districts that drew down their reserves during the economic crisis were forced to make drastic cuts. New Trier kept cuts out of the classroom and has been able to retain the highest bond rating, Aaa, in part because of its savings. Even with the uncertainty surrounding state and federal funding, New Trier has been able to maintain and enhance its curricular and extracurricular programs without asking taxpayers to approve funding for additional operational expenses for the past 11 years. The District expects it can continue to balance its budget for at least the next five years and beyond with projected revenues.

The charts and graphs on these pages outline the District’s final budget numbers for the 2013-2014 school year and show the largest sources of District funding and the largest areas of expense.

More detailed information can be found on the District’s Financial Information website, where financial reports and documents supporting New Trier’s budget planning are regularly updated. The website can be found on the Board of Education page of our main website, www.newtrier.k12.il.us.

### FY 2013-2014 FINAL OPERATING BUDGET (IN MILLIONS):

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*Includes transfers

The District’s Operating Budget includes all Operating Funds, which represent the vast majority of the District’s overall budget. The District also maintains non-operating funds, including Debt Services, Capital Projects, and Fire Prevention and Safety.
FINANCIAL RECOGNITION FOR DISTRICT 203

District 203 is committed to transparency and the highest standards of financial management. These independent organizations have recognized the District for its outstanding work on budgeting and financial reporting:

- **Aaa bond rating**: New Trier was one of the first school districts in Illinois to achieve this top rating from Moody’s Investors Services, meaning the credit rating agency deems District 203 extremely creditworthy and any investment in the District low-risk.

- **Illinois State Board of Education Financial Recognition**: District 203 has received ISBE’s highest Financial Profile designation for 10 consecutive years

- **Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA), Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**: 10 consecutive years

- **Association of School Business Officials International, Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting**: 11 consecutive years
New Trier Township High School District 203 invites all residents to a Special Board of Education meeting to discuss potential solutions for its aging Winnetka Campus facilities.

Three architectural design teams will present their concepts for a new, modern facility in place of three inefficient, inaccessible buildings constructed in 1912, 1931, and 1950. This project would be significantly smaller than one proposed by the District in 2010.

The meeting is an important part of New Trier’s outreach as it seeks public input on its facilities in the coming months. More information on the District’s work on facilities can be found on pages 8-9 of this report.

**What:** District 203 Board of Education Special Meeting on Facilities

**Date:** Monday, Feb. 10

**Time:** 5 p.m.-Conceptual designs on display 6 p.m.-Meeting begins

**Location:** New Trier Northfield Campus 7 Happ Road, Room C234