

BOARD BRIEFS

*News from the New Trier Township High School District 203
Board of Education Meeting
June 8, 2020*

New Trier's Ongoing Commitment to Equity

New Trier has work to do now and in the long term to assure that the school is a place where all students feel safe, welcome, valued, and heard, Superintendent Paul Sally told the Board at the opening of Monday's meeting.

Sally said the recent historic protests against racial injustice across the country are amplifying voices that need to be heard, including the voices of students who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color and who have experienced racism at New Trier.

"New Trier is overwhelmingly white. That is a fact. With that, we are doing a disservice to our graduates if we avoid talking openly about our own identities, about racism, and about how to commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity in a world that looks very different from the North Shore," Sally said. "In all pursuits, I want our graduates fueled by the emotion of what they believe is right, yet guided by the critical thinking skills needed to defend their beliefs and find solutions for progress."

New Trier's strategic plan, [New Trier 2030](#), includes Culture, Climate, and Equity among its six frameworks and embeds equity in other frameworks such as intellectual engagement, personal growth, and hiring. The plan includes both broad core values and goals as well as measurable annual strategies toward achieving those goals.

This school year each department or area of the school was required to come up with an equity goal. Those goals included professional development for faculty and staff and specific curricular or extracurricular initiatives. The Applied Arts Department, for example, committed to ensuring that underrepresented students can see themselves in careers such as chef or engineer by having lessons on equity and inviting guest professionals of different genders and races. The English Department, meanwhile, met together in a series of workshops to help teachers learn best practices around planning lessons on texts that deal with issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, and religion while safeguarding vulnerable populations and contextualizing pejorative language. These are just a few examples of the work being done this year in service of New Trier's strategic planning equity goals.

Determining steps for next year is the highest priority. To that end, the school will work this summer on establishing its 2020-2021 Annual Plan, which will include our work in the Culture, Climate, and Equity area. The Annual Plan will be finalized at the Board of Education meeting on August 24.

The District's [Commitment to Equity](#) page also provides examples of other work the District is doing and has done in the area of equity. The page includes the message sent to students, parents, and staff on June 2 about the protests and a video message to students on June 6 about the District's ongoing work. Sally acknowledged that the work in which the District is engaged is part of a long journey toward equity at New Trier, and that the school has far to go.

He encouraged all parents, students, staff, alumni, and community members to let their voices be heard as the District continues this crucial work.

New Trier to Implement New Block Schedule for 2020-2021 School Year

New Trier will move to a block schedule for the 2020-2021 school year that seeks to provide students, teachers, and families with stability, prioritizes contact time with teachers, and provides more time within the school day for students to seek help from teachers, make up tests, or connect with other student resources.

The Scheduling Reopening Committee has agreed in principle on the format for a new schedule, although the precise length of the school day and issues including the delivery of specific student supports and extracurricular programming are still being discussed before a final decision is made.

Northfield Campus Principal Paul Waechtler, one of the committee's leaders, said that the committee was focused on creating a schedule that would work in all of next year's learning scenarios that New Trier must consider while it awaits state guidance: fully in school with health and safety precautions, some students in school with precautions and others at home, or fully remote.

The proposed schedule would begin each full school week with a Trevian Day, in which all nine class periods and adviser room meet. This would allow teachers to set the course for the week and increase their contact time with their students to better build communities within their classrooms. Unlike the Trevian Remote Learning schedule employed amid the crisis of the pandemic's beginning, these days would not be independent study as grey days were.

The rest of the week will move into a Blue/Green schedule similar to the one used during remote learning with a few adjustments. Early Bird will now take place before adviser room and take place four days a week for 55 minutes. Adviser room will be its regular 25 minute period, and then other classes will meet for 70 minutes on alternating days: Periods 1-5 on Blue Days and Periods 6-9 on Green Days, with a 10th period "X Block" on Green Days for staff professional development, student supports, and other student programming to be determined.

One important change in this schedule will be an embedded lunch period. All students will have lunch embedded within an extended class period each day. For example, on a Blue Day, Period 3 would be the lunch period for all students. Approximately a third of students would have lunch and then 70 minutes of class, another third would have class with a lunch break in the middle, and the final third would begin with 70 minutes of class and have lunch after. This reduces scheduling conflicts and assures that all students have a lunch period. The committee is examining what types of classes are better suited for the different embedded lunch options.

The committee's next steps are determining the details of the bell schedule, building a master schedule, determining student and staff programming for the X Block, finalizing the yearly calendar, and developing professional development for the block schedule and potential remote learning. Students and families will receive a copy of their schedule in early August so they can check to ensure there are no errors.

Northfield Campus Principal Paul Waechtler, Winnetka Campus Principal Denise Dubravec, Superintendent Paul Sally, and a student representative will hold an evening webinar next week

to answer questions about the schedule. All current and incoming families will receive an email prior to that webinar with information about how to participate. The school is asking parents and students to watch together. The webinar will also be posted on the District website for those who cannot watch it live.

The full Board presentation, including sample schedules and a sample school year calendar, can be found [here](#).

Staff Professional Development Focuses on Different Reopening Scenarios

New Trier is offering faculty and staff a toolkit of professional development and other resources to help successfully transition from a daily, 9-period in person instructional model to a blended and block schedule model in which students may be learning in person and remotely, Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, told the Board.

Tragos said some of the critical resources developed by the Teaching, Technology, and Professional Development Reopening Committee include Remote Learning Standards of Practice, a professional development plan around these standards of practice, and an interactive website. The committee is also working on other issues such as Zoom expectations and solutions for a blended/hybrid model of teaching in anticipation of the state's guidance on potential limitations for in-person learning in the fall.

In all scenarios, the standards of practice will focus on these areas: building relationships with students, designing effective Canvas courses, establishing expectations and routines, employing innovative instructional strategies, using diverse assessment instruments, creating and maintaining cycles for feedback, and creating communities of learning.

Professional development will focus on these standards, and the interactive website will include a variety of tools and resources for teachers and staff, Tragos said. The full presentation can be found [here](#).

Board Honors Students, Staff for Accolades in Second Semester

The Board of Education honored students and staff for accomplishments during the second semester of this school year. Honorees included:

Illinois Economics Challenge, 1st Place

Maggie Cao, Tinah Hong, Andrew Kearney, David Peng
Head Coach: Jenny Niemi

German High School Day

1st Place – Cultural Essay

Anna Shah

1st Place – Poetry Recitation

Sabrina Tossing

1st Place – Videos Commercial

Sophia Iskowich, Emma Powers, Ava Shah

3rd Place – Program Cover Art

Claire Cohen

German Teachers: Venera Stabinsky, Katja Steen

IHSA Chess Team, 2nd Place, State Tournament

Adrian Calinescu, Sawyer Harris, Jeffrey Huang, Si Ri (Roger) Li, Sarah Lin, Max Malecki, David Peng, Justin Weinzweig, Mason Werner

Coaches: Matthew Mersch, Daniel Kim

Illinois Japan Bowl

2nd Place - Level 3

Jefferson Lin, Aidan Moore, Justine Xie

2nd Place - Level 4

Cate Chan, Donovan Greene, Jonna Izenstark

Japanese Club: Naomi Suzuki-DiPalma

MAX Field Hockey, Coach of the Year – Illinois/West

Stephanie Nykaza

IHSA Boys Swimming & Diving, State Meet

Pearce Bailey

5th Place - 100 Yard Freestyle

6th Place - 200 Yard Freestyle Relay

9th Place - 400 Yard Freestyle Relay

10th Place - 50 Yard Freestyle

Sam Dienstag

6th Place - 200 Yard Freestyle Relay

9th Place - 400 Yard Freestyle Relay

Marc Hagist

6th Place - 200 Yard Freestyle Relay

9th Place - 400 Yard Freestyle Relay

Rishi Nair

6th Place - 200 Yard Freestyle Relay

9th Place - 400 Yard Freestyle Relay

Coaches: Josh Runkle, Bruce Kimball, Sarah Axon, Mike Leissner, Tim O'Hagan, Erik Saszik, Lawrence Stoegbauer

IHSA Boys Bowling, 11th Place State

Matt Booden

Coaches: Andrew Juedes, Robert Amoruso

Science Olympiad Regional, 1st Place

Anna Arthur, Michael Chen, Pranav Doradla, Elizabeth Feoktistov, Izzy Hester, Eric Liu, Annabel Ma, Emilia McDougal, Mia Moline, Louis Scheinfeld, Luke VonKapff, Jason Yuan, Jonathan Yuan, Irene Xu, Maryanne Xu

Head Coach: Alex Howe

Other News from the June 8 Meeting:

- New Trier is once again hosting American Red Cross blood drives at its Northfield Campus on July 6-7 and August 3. Find out more information and sign up [here](#).
- The Board approved a plan for facilities work in Year 2 of the District's 15-year Facilities Plan that includes new and renovated classroom spaces on the third floor of the

Winnetka Campus, modernizing washrooms and hallways at the Winnetka Campus, upgrading furniture and technology in Building D on the Northfield Campus, gymnasium backstop and folding partition replacements at the Northfield Campus, and mechanical work at both campuses. This work will take place in the summer of 2021. Chris Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, also updated the Board on work taking place this summer, including roof replacements at both campuses, a library renovation at the Northfield Campus, and new classrooms and offices on the third floor of the North and Tower buildings of the Winnetka Campus. These projects are on or ahead of schedule.

- The Board approved a one-year contract extension with the New Trier Education Support Professionals Association, which represents approximately 190 staff members who fill roles related to security, assisting students and teachers in classrooms, working in offices, supporting technology, and providing nursing and athletic training care. The association had been meeting with a District negotiating team to work on an agreement to succeed their prior agreement, which expires at the end of this school year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the switch to remote learning, the parties agreed it would not be possible to have the type of robust in-person interest-based process they had planned, so they instead negotiated a one-year extension of the current contract after meeting remotely several times through the spring. The extension provides average increases of 2.8 percent for members of the unit, including a 0.9 percent base increase and regular step and lane movement.

The New Trier Board of Education generally meets on the third Monday of each month, with the business portion of the meeting beginning at 7 p.m. in Room C234 on the Northfield Campus, 7 Happ Road.

Full videos of Board meetings are available online at <https://nthsmediaspace.kaltura.com/category/BOARD+OF+EDUCATION/>

Information about Board of Education members, upcoming meetings, agendas, minutes, and other documents are available at <http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/boardofeducation/>

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