

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

November 17, 2014

**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, November 17, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.

Members Present

Mr. Alan Dolinko, President
Mr. F. Malcolm Harris, Vice President
Mr. Peter Fischer
Ms. Lori Goldstein
Mr. Patrick O'Donoghue
Mr. Greg Robitaille

Administrators Present

Dr. Linda L. Yonke, Superintendent
Mr. Paul Sally, Assistant Superintendent
for Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Tim Hayes, Assistant Superintendent
for Student Services
Ms. Denise Dubravec, Principal – Winnetka Campus
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

Members Absent

Mr. John Myefski

Also Present

Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Mr. George Sanders, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Ellen Ambuehl, Director of Special Education; Mrs. Linda Knier, Director of Academic Services; Mr. Gerry Munley, Assistant Principal, Winnetka Campus; Ms. Athena Arvanitis, Director of Student Life; Mr. Scott Williams, Assistant Principal, Winnetka Campus; Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Principal, Northfield Campus; Mr. Todd Maxman, President, New Trier Township Education Association, Social Studies Department; Mr. Eric Saszik, Mathematics Department; Mr. Spiro Bolos, Social Studies Department; Ms. Jenny Wexler, Mathematics Department; Ms. Mary Lappan, Mathematics Department; Ms. Elizabeth Blodgett, New Trier Educational Support Professionals Association; Mr. Ed Zwirner, English Department Coordinator; Ms. Andrea Levin, Social Studies Department; Mr. Chris Rutt, Kinetic Wellness Department; Mr. Jamie Atwell, Social Studies Department; Mr. Marc Garneau, Library Department; Ms. Deborah Lazar, Library Department; Mr. Michael O'Connor, Post High School Counseling Department; Ms. Kay Pothast, Kinetic Wellness Department; Ms. Jaqui Pritchard, Technology Department; Mr. Tom Lau, Art Department; Ms. Elizabeth Hennessy, Wm. Blair & Co.; Ms. Karen Ann Cullotta, Chicago Tribune; Mr. Steve Shearing, Pioneer Press; members of the press and community.

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER – Open Session – 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Dolinko called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:32 p.m. for November 17, 2014. Roll call was taken. All members were present except John Myefski. There was no Closed Session Meeting for this month. Mr. Dolinko welcomed those in attendance and noted that if anyone wished to address the Board during the Citizens' Comments part of the agenda, he or she would need to fill out a yellow Communications Request Form found on the table at the back of the room, and pass it up to the Board table.

II. Closed Session – NO CLOSED SESSION

No Closed Session meeting was held for November 2014.

III. Open Session – 7:30 p.m. – C234

Mr. Dolinko called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of November 17, 2014 to order at 7:32 p.m. Roll call was taken. All members were present except John Myefski.

IV. Minutes

Mr. Dolinko requested a motion to approve the minutes of the October Regular meeting, open and closed session, held on October 20, 2014. Mr. Fischer moved and Ms. Goldstein seconded the motion to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 20, 2014 open and closed session. Mr. Dolinko asked if there were

any comments or changes to the October minutes. There being none, a roll call vote was taken. The members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Harris, Mr. O'Donoghue, Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Fischer, Mr. Dolinko

NAY: None

The motion passed.

V. Communications

Mr. Dolinko invited any members of the Community who wished to address the Board to come forward. No one in the audience wished to address the Board.

Mr. Dolinko took the opportunity on behalf of the Board, the Administration, staff and students to thank the township taxpayers for granting permission to renovate the Winnetka Campus. He noted it was gratifying to know residents feel this is a worthy project and looked forward to the hard work ahead to bring the project in on time and on budget. Dr. Yonke also expressed her gratitude to the taxpayers of New Trier Township and all those who supported this project. She noted that every precinct in the township had a majority yes vote, and that the precinct where the campus is located had a 68% yes vote. She thanked everyone involved for their hard work.

VI. Special Orders of Business

A. Report from Campus Principals and Assistant Superintendents

Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal of the Northfield Campus, highlighted activities and events taking place at the freshman campus, which included the distribution of student grades, Homecoming, Parent-Teacher Conferences and placement testing for the students of the Class of 2019. The Parent Technology "Boot Camp" took place on October 25 with over 300 parents attending, receiving very positive feedback. Mr. Waechtler also noted the Veterans' Day flag-raising ceremony which took place in the new stadium with 900 students and 3 uniformed members of the 85th Support Command. The choir sang "America the Beautiful" and a freshman student performed on the bugle. Thanks go out to Mark Howard for organizing this day of recognition. The officers mentioned it was one of the best ceremonies they had been to in years.

Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal of the Winnetka Campus, thanked the faculty, staff and security for all the extra work over the two days of Parent-Teacher Conferences. Eighty-four percent of parents signed up for conferences. She noted that she and Gerry Munley are now planning to gather data on the number of parents who actually attend the teacher conferences. The annual Literary Festival took place at the Winnetka Campus on Friday, November 14, with over 340 students participating. The day was a huge success with nineteen different writers from all over the United States speaking. Essayist and FAN representative William Deresiewicz also spoke to students. Athletic news included the following: Football ended their season in the quarter-finals, losing against Stevenson High School; boys' cross country placed ninth in state; girls' cross country was seventh in state; Mimi Smith placed eighth overall in the state girls' cross country meet; boys' soccer lost to Fremd in the super sectional; girls' tennis ended up fourth in state; girls' volleyball lost in the regional finals; boys' rowing placed thirteenth out of eighty-five teams competing at the Head of the Charles; girls' rowing placed twenty-seventh out of eighty-five teams at the Head of the Charles; boys' golf is second in state; girls' field hockey are the state champions; and girls' golf is third in state. Girls' Swimming and Diving are still in state competition next weekend at Evanston. New Trier hosted the IMEA District VII Band, Orchestra and Chorus Festival which took place Saturday, November 8 with 700 students participating from fifty-two schools. Ms. Dubravec highlighted a number of service learning opportunities for students which include NUSH (Northwestern University Settlement House) run by Student Activities with Stacy Kolach; New Trier Tri-Ship's involvement in their community activities, tree sale, and annual food drive; and the seniors having kicked off their annual fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity. This year marks a total of 30 homes in Waukegan and the Philippines that have been funded through New Trier seniors.

Mr. Tim Hayes, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, noted upcoming ECGC sponsored events which included Dr. Claude Steele at Evanston Township High School on December 8 at 7:00 p.m. He is a nationally recognized researcher on stereotype threat and its impact on academic performance. There will be workshops on the next day and again here at New Trier in January. On Tuesday, December 2, Anmarie Chereso and Katie Kolbe will present on "Mindfulness and Meditation" and the annual Names Program will take place on December 3. Mr. Hayes also highlighted the Performing Arts events that will

take place before the next regular Board meeting which include the Frosh/Soph Musical, the Winter Play, and the Winter Music Festival (Sunday, December 14).

Mr. Paul Sally, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, reported on two events that took place since the last Board of Education meeting which were the all staff Institute Day on November 7 and the Compliance visit from the Regional Office of Education. He noted his thanks and appreciation to the Professional Development Council for the informative program put together on the use of our mobile devices. The visit from the ROE is done every four years and it takes a comprehensive look at everything from Curriculum to Board Policies. The meetings went well and Dr. Yonke added that the compliance officer was very complimentary on their findings for the school.

Dr. Linda Yonke reported there was one FOIA request that came in before the last Board of Education meeting in October. It requested information on football helmets from WBBM Chicago. The request has been responded to and was completed on November 3.

B. School Report Card

Dr. Linda Yonke presented a report on the School Report Card, which is an annual report published by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The State Board of Education has changed the structure of the report with additional information on schools as well as its basic original focus on test scores and college readiness. Dr. Yonke demonstrated the location of the Report Card website, which can be found at <http://www.isbe.net/>. She noted that information on every school in Illinois can be found here. Navigating through the website, Dr. Yonke was able to access our District's site with Fast Facts highlighting reading and math scores, academic warning categories, student demographics and graduation rates. The site also provides a great deal of information on budget, expenditures per pupil and teacher characteristics. Mr. Dolinko opened the floor for Board discussion. Ms. Goldstein commented on how proud she was on the caliber of faculty with 96% of our teachers having a Master's degree. She wanted to emphasize that our focus should also be on the social and emotional wellness and physical health as well as the academics. Dr. Yonke responded noting that over 33% of the District's expenditure budget is allotted for support services, several points higher than the state average.

C. Facilities Steering Committee Update Report

Dr. Yonke presented a report on the current status of the work of the Facilities Steering Committee. Quickly after the referendum passed, the committee met with the construction manager, the architects and the departments that would be moving into new space at the Winnetka Campus. Discussions have moved from schematic design topics to design development, meaning a closer look at the spaces and materials used. There have been two full days of owner, architect and construction manager (OAC) meetings to look at the logistics of the work involved, site planning, temporary classrooms as well as temporary parking. The approval process with the Village of Winnetka includes presenting to the Planning Commission on November 19, the Design Review Board on November 20, and the Zoning Board of Appeals on December 8. Draft calendars for the school years during construction have been created and discussed to accommodate longer summer breaks which would allow for the extensive demolition and construction to occur when classes are not in session. The committee is planning to hire a project manager to oversee the entirety of the work and the bidding process for the District. Dr. Yonke and Ms. Niki Dizon are working on communications with the Community Engagement Committee on how best to keep the community and the New Trier families informed. Mr. Dolinko added that of equal importance is to manage any rumors that may circulate regarding construction, calendars, schedule and all other matters. Dr. Yonke acknowledged that this is part of the overall plan, which may also include a rumor link to the District web page to respond to any misinformation about the project. A neighbors meeting is planned for December 2.

D. Bond Sale Proposal

In Cheryl Witham's absence, Ms. Elizabeth Hennessy of William Blair & Co. presented information to the Board regarding the bond sale for the Winnetka Campus Facility Project. She noted the Finance Committee met on October 22 to discuss the bond issuance timing. The amount of the referendum bond proceeds is \$89,000,000; the District's pledge from Reserves is \$11,307,236 for an estimated total project cost of \$100,307,236. Pepper Construction has provided a three year estimated construction draw schedule for the work. With this information, the committee began its analysis on whether to execute the bond sale in one transaction or in pieces and what impact various approaches would have. Three options were considered, which included selling all the bonds at once, which could happen as early as January after the Cook County canvass and the thirty day protest period is completed; two sales occurring in February 2015 for \$40M and the second in February 2016 for \$49M; and the third option of three issues of \$35M in February 2015,

\$42M in February 2016 and \$12M in February 2017. Ms. Hennessy noted consideration was also given to flexibility in purchasing raw materials in bulk in order to realize substantial savings for the District. Upon conclusion, the committee determined that the safest, most straightforward path, with level debt service over twenty years would be to issue all the bonds at one time. Board discussion followed with committee members Greg Robitaille and Al Dolinko who both supported the committee's recommendation that a one-time sale would best serve the District and the repayment will not exceed twenty years. Also, if all project management goes well with savings along the way, we may not need to reach into the District Reserves as deeply. Ms. Hennessy responded to Board member questions on bond issuances including timing and the fees involved. The Finance Committee also discussed the method of bond sale by looking at both the negotiated bond sale and the competitive bond sale. Historically, the District has followed the competitive bond sale method because of its strong Aaa bond rating and that it is well known as an institution and entity. The last concern for the committee was to determine where the bond proceeds would be deposited. Due to the construction draw schedule, the majority of the funds will need to be invested short term. The committee is comfortable with the performance of PMA for the District and recommends that these facility bonds be deposited with them. PMA will provide services of tracking and calculating the arbitrage requirements and provide cash flow and investment advice. Mr. Fischer moved that the Board approve the recommendations of the Board of Education Finance Committee: issue bonds according to the Option 1 schedule, issue the bonds in a competitive sale, and deposit the bond proceeds with PMA. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Harris, Mr. O'Donoghue, Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Fischer, Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Dolinko

NAY: None

The motion passed.

E. School Calendar Update 2014-2015

Dr. Linda Yonke noted that this calendar update, incorporating the PARCC testing, was presented at the October Regular Board meeting. The reason for the delay in final action was to wait to hear from the ISBE for more information and instructions about PARCC testing. No word has come from the state and it is important to publish the changes to this year's calendar so appropriate planning can be made. The final proposed testing schedule modifications will be to have two full days of testing on March 17 and March 18; and two full days of testing on May 19 and May 20. A fifth day of testing will be on March 3 for the ACT test. Mr. Sally stated that there is still information needed from the State for the implementation of the tests and we hope to hear from them soon. Board discussion followed regarding the late arrival days eliminated. Mr. Sally also noted that the faculty professional development will now move to the shorter days of testing. Mr. Fischer moved and Ms. Goldstein seconded the motion that the Board approve the revisions to the 2014-2015 School Year Calendar as required by PARCC testing as amended. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. O'Donoghue, Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Fischer, Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Harris, Mr. Dolinko

NAY: None

The motion passed.

F. School Calendar Proposals for 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018

Dr. Yonke presented three draft calendars for the school years of 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 to the Board for discussion and feedback. The calendars will be on the December Board Meeting agenda for approval. The construction schedule for the Winnetka facility project has created the need to look at the three years of school calendars to allow for a twelve week summer break when the largest demolition and construction would take place. This accommodation would ensure minimal disruptions to classes. Dr. Yonke noted the calendars have maintained a two week Winter Break and a one week Spring Break to be synchronized with the elementary districts. She shared the calendars with the Faculty Leadership teams, Department heads, and the Parent Associations for their feedback. She reviewed the days that will temporarily be attendance days and those days that will continue as no school days. Dr. Yonke noted that while these are temporary measures, it does present opportunities to try new changes with scheduling, such as first semester exams before the Winter Break or starting school after Labor Day. Board discussion followed with members commenting on the unusual times, the thoughtful and methodical process, the concerns with not having Rosh Hashanah off, use of emergency days, and the readiness of Pepper to

maintain their construction schedule. Mr. Dolinko summarized the hope that everyone would understand the need for the temporary changes. Dr. Yonke pointed out that each calendar has the same number of attendance days and institute days as we now have and that students will have one day off every month but one. Mr. Dolinko noted that this will be an action item at the December meeting after feedback is gathered.

VII. Administrative Items

A. **Tentative 2014 Tax Levy**

Mr. Dolinko and Dr. Yonke presented the report prepared by Ms. Cheryl Witham on the Proposed 2014 Tax Levy, which supports the fiscal year 2015-2016 Budget. The Property Tax Extension Limitation Act, which is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 5%, whichever is less, will limit the actual levy extension. Also included in this calculation are the 2014 Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) and the amount of the new construction projected in 2014. The EAV is expected to increase due to the modest increase in new construction. Another variable is the state multiplier, which is assigned by the Illinois Department of Revenue to bring all property in the County to 33.3% of the fair cash property value. In consideration of all of the above for planning purposes, the projected levy is based on the new property estimated at \$25 million with the calculated maximum tax extension to be \$94,777,826. If the Levy amount is set at the higher estimated new property of \$80 million, the projected 2014 Levy amount will only change if actual new construction exceeds the estimated \$25 million of new property. Board discussion followed regarding the low and high estimated property figures and the benefits of trying to capture all new property. Conversation also included concerns on legislative activity with Senate Bill 16, which if passed could impact District revenues by \$1.6 million dollars. Therefore, it is recommended to use the 2014 Tax Levy estimate of \$95,913,418 based on the higher estimate of \$80 million for new property. Mr. Dolinko highlighted that there will be a Public Hearing on the Levy at the December Board meeting as has been the usual District practice before the Board takes action on setting the Levy. Mr. Fischer moved that the Board approve the 2014 Tentative Tax Levy estimate of \$95,913,418 and that a public hearing be held at the December 15, 2014 regularly scheduled Board Meeting. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Fischer, Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Harris, Mr. O'Donoghue, Mr. Dolinko

NAY: None

The motion passed.

B. **Financial Reports for October 2014**

Mr. Dolinko reported for Ms. Witham in her absence. He noted that Ms. Witham's reports are similar to other months showing expected expenditures above revenue during the months between tax receipt payments. Dr. Yonke noted that the Investment Reports also are similar with little or no changes on rates and returns. There were no questions from Board members for further discussion.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- Bill List for the Period October 1-31, 2014
- Personnel Report
- New Course Proposals

Mr. Dolinko asked Board members if there were any items on the Consent Agenda that should be addressed in a separate discussion. There were no requests for separate discussion items. Mr. O'Donoghue moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda which includes the Bill List for the period of October 1-31, 2014, the Personnel Report, and the New Course Proposals. Mr. Fischer seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. O'Donoghue, Mr. Robitaille, Mr. Fischer, Ms. Goldstein, Mr. Harris, Mr. Dolinko

NAY: None

The motion passed.

IX. Board Member Reports

Mr. Peter Fischer noted that the *All School Forum* had not yet met. *Facility Steering Committee* work has already been discussed. The *New Trier Educational Foundation* Board of Director's meeting took place. They are planning for the Alumni Achievement Awards banquet to be held in March 2015. He stated they are

anticipating a good crowd and it is a great group of honorees.

Ms. Lori Goldstein reported for the *Parents Association* meeting at which Linda Knier presented on the Teacher Orientation Program. *ECGC* presented Dr. Karen Cassiday who spoke on *Laughter in the Teenage Years* to an audience of about 100. The ECGC Parent meeting had a Round Table discussion which featured Tiffany Myers of the Social Work Department and Kristine Hummel who shared information on the support services available to help students thrive. Ms. Goldstein shared news from *NSSSED* which included their bidding process for new transportation. Their current contract is with *SEPTRAN*. They are looking to upgrade their internet wireless infrastructure. Their FY2014 Audit is completed and looked fine. They are discussing alternate billing structures, which has effectively put Deerfield's withdrawal on hold until all options are considered.

Mr. Dolinko attended two *Booster Club* meetings as the October meeting was delayed until after the Board of Education October meeting. The Booster Club has had a very busy fall with the intramural programs running for basketball, volleyball and the introduction of paddleball. The last being very popular, the club is considering adding another league to accommodate the growing wait list. Mr. Dolinko also shared information on the club's annual fundraiser, the Booster Bash. It will be on January 31, 2015 at the Land Rover Dealership on Frontage Road. The evening will feature refreshments and live music and all are invited to this social event to benefit the work of the Booster Club.

X. Board Members' Calendar of Events

- Calendar of Events

Dr. Yonke noted there will be a change to the 2014-2015 School Year Calendar regarding the exact date of the Sophomore Service Learning days. It was determined the shift in dates would not greatly impact the calendar and would not require another vote. The All School Forum will meet on Wednesday, November 19; the Village of Winnetka Planning Commission meets on the 19th also and the Village Design Review Board will meet on November 20. The Thanksgiving Break begins on Wednesday, November 26 and the Tri-Ship Tree Sale begins on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. The Winter Music Festival is on Sunday, December 14 at 3:00 pm in the Gates Gym. The interscholastic Basketball match between New Trier and Evanston Township will be on Tuesday, December 9 in the Gates Gym. Mr. Robitaille requested more information to be communicated to parents on the start dates for Summer School for the calendars being considered. Dr. Yonke agreed it would be important for vacation and sport participation planning. She noted that Summer School will take place at the Northfield Campus in these interim years.

- Board Members' Request for Staff Research and Future Agenda Items
There were no requests for new research or future agenda items.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. O'Donoghue moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Robitaille seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote being taken, all members indicated they were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lou Anne Kelly, Secretary

Alan R. Dolinko, President