

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
October 14, 2019
New Trier Township High School
7 Happ Road, Room A201A
Northfield, IL 60093**

A **Special Meeting** of the Board of Education of New Trier Township High School District 203, 7 Happ Road, Room A201A, was held on Monday, October 14, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present

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

Administrators Present

Dr. Paul Sally, Superintendent
Dr. Timothy Hayes, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
Mr. Christopher Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations
Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education
Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal – Winnetka Campus
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

Also Present

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

***I. Open Session**

Ms. Albrecht called the Open Session meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Roll call was taken and all members were present.

II. Communications – Citizens’ Comments

Ms. Albrecht invited anyone from the audience who wished to address the Board to come forward and fill out a yellow communications request form from the back table. One person came forward to address the Board: Ms. Nancy Hoying of Wilmette. She is a New Trier parent and co-president of the League of Women Voters – Wilmette. Ms. Hoying shared her thoughts on the first of the IASB Resolutions. She went on to encourage the Board to send a delegate to the Joint Conference in November and to oppose resolution one.

III. Discussion of IASB Resolutions

Dr. Sally began by noting that it was a meeting of the committee of the whole and that no action would be taken that evening. He went on to state the order of discussion that would take place regarding the Illinois Association of School Boards’ (IASB) proposed resolutions, noting that each resolution would be briefly summarized; he also outlined the resolution process. Dr. Sally noted that he did not know of a time when New Trier sent a delegate to the Joint Conference of IASB, Illinois Association of School Administrators, and the Illinois Association of School Business Officials, to which Ms. Ducommun concurred. It was also noted that these resolutions are not binding, but will assist IASB in knowing what the priorities are of its members. Each member school has one vote per resolution.

Dr. Sally summarized *Resolution 1 – Student Safety* and *Resolution 3 – School Safety Grant Program*, as well as, his proposed position on each. Discussion then began amongst Board Members. The conversation focused on several points, one of which was the fact that a School Resource Officer (SRO) needs to be an active law enforcement member not a retired law enforcement officer. Dr. Sally and Mr. Paul Waechtler, Northfield Campus Principal, shared information about New Trier’s SRO along with the interview process. Ms. Albrecht shared that in 2021, it will be required that SROs have more training than just for firearms. Conversation continued around who should have a gun in a school and who should decide that. Ms. Albrecht highlighted Dr. Sally’s concern about

sending New Trier students to a school where the District is uncertain about who may be carrying a weapon. Other concerns centered around who would oversee the mental health of a retired officer who is hired as an SRO. Mr. Robitaille focused his comments on self-determination which would allow a community to make these decisions. He stated that this is not about if a school should arm teachers and added that he vehemently opposes arming anyone but an SRO at New Trier. Conversation around this continued between Mr. Robitaille and Dr. Glucksman. Mr. McLane noted that he thought this was a signaling opportunity. As discussion went on, it was decided to review each resolution separately, with concurrence to change from abstain to oppose on Resolution 3. Mr. Dronen stated that he attended last year's Joint Conference in an unofficial capacity and urges the Board to send a member this year, noting that New Trier is a leader in the state and community. Ms. Hahn noted that Resolution 1 was not appropriate for local control and is a public health issue, to which Ms. Ducommun noted how she liked the way Ms. Hahn framed this issue.

Resolution 2 – Business Enterprises – Minority Owned was then summarized and discussed. Dr. Sally noted the positive underlying principles of the resolution, but that he was uncomfortable with the implications of this resolution. Ms. Albrecht concurred, noting it was unclear of the unintended consequences. Mr. McLane added that the resolution is so ambiguous and New Trier does not want to come off as mean spirited; he noted that the memo that Dr. Sally will create in response to the special meeting will be an important document.

Resolution 13 – Amended Position Statement 5.05 Prevailing Wage

Dr. Sally summarized this resolution followed by Mr. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, who explained prevailing wage and the history on the law. Mr. McLane inquired if this would lead to better service and more competition, to which Mr. Johnson noted that he could not speak to that. Dr. Sally explained that the current position advocated to exempt schools from the Prevailing Wage Act, but the proposed amended resolution now mentions providing flexibility for schools. Ms. Hahn noted her concern for support would make it seem like the District was anti-union. Mr. Robitaille mentioned that decisions should be made in the interest of the taxpayers. The conversation then turned to the Winnetka Campus project with Mr. Robitaille and Mr. Johnson discussing prevailing wage in relation to that.

Resolutions 11, 12, and 15 – Charter Schools were grouped together. After Dr. Sally's summary, he noted that in several conversations he had with various Board members, they requested a better understanding of the potential impact of charter schools. Mr. McLane noted that it would be helpful to learn more at a digestible time in the future.

At this point in the order of discussion, Dr. Sally grouped those resolutions that he recommended that the Board abstain from as they do not pertain to New Trier, change the District's practice or the issue is not significant enough to encourage efforts on the matter. They included *Resolutions 4 – School District Police Force, 5 – Background Checks – Substitute Teachers, 6 – School Safety – Traffic Zones, 7 – School Board Elections – Seating of New Members, 8 – School Board Elections – Swearing In, and 9 – School Board Elections – Terms*, which Dr. Sally briefly summarized.

There was one other resolution that Dr. Sally noted that should have a proposed position of oppose and that was *Resolution 10 – School Member Compensation*, to which all Board Members agreed.

Finally, there were four resolutions that Dr. Sally classified with a support proposed position. They included: *Resolutions 14 – Amended Position 1.01 – Educational Programs, 16 – Amended Position 2.04 – Funding Special Education Programs, 17 – Amended Position 2.04 – Funding Special Education Programs, and 18 – Reaffirmation of Positions 1.08 – Standardized Test Procedures and Position 1.09 – Student Assessment*. After briefly summarizing each, Dr. Sally explained why he was in support of them. Questions and discussion mainly focused on funding for special education programs with Dr. Sally and Mr. Johnson responding to Board members' inquiries.

Dr. Sally noted that he would get started on a memo summarizing the perspective on the resolutions. In the coming days, he may speak further with individual Board members to ensure that he has their position on a given resolution correct. The goal will be to group some resolutions that Dr. Sally knows will unanimously pass a vote at the October 21st Board Meeting, while separating out those resolutions that will require their own vote as they may not result in unanimous votes.

****IV. Adjournment**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

Cathy Albrecht, President