

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

November 18, 2021

**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 15, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present

Ms. Cathy Albrecht, President
Mr. Avik Das
Mr. Keith Dronen, Vice President
Ms. Jean Hahn
Mr. Brad McLane
Ms. Sally Tomlinson

Administrators Present

Dr. Paul Sally, Superintendent
Mr. Christopher Johnson, Associate Superintendent
Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Asst. Supt. for Special Ed. and Student Services
Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal – Winnetka Campus
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

Present via Phone

Ms. Kimberly Alcantara

Also Present

Dr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer; Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Ms. Aileen Geary, Social Studies Department Faculty and New Trier High School Educational Association President; Mr. Scott Williams, Assistant Principal for Student Services; Ms. Gail Gamrath, Assistant Principal at the Northfield campus; Mr. Dave Conway, Director of Physical Plant Services; Mr. Mike Lee, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services; Mr. Carlo Trovato, English Department Faculty; Ms. Laura Smith, Science Department Faculty; Ms. Sara Chao, Modern and Classical Languages Department Faculty; Mr. Jim Burnside, Assistant Athletic Director; Mr. Andy Butler, Kinetic Wellness Department Chair; Ms. Sue Ellen Haak and Mr. Mark Howard, Freshman Adviser Chairs; Ms. Julie Smith and Mr. Ted Koulentes, Sophomore Adviser Chairs; Ms. Trish Sheridan and Mr. Greg Segio, Junior Adviser Chairs; Ms. Susie Paunan and Dr. Chris Pearson, Senior Adviser Chairs; Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Mr. Eric Johnson, Technology Department; Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary; students, members of the press and community.

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER – 5:00 p.m. – C234

Ms. Albrecht called the Regular Meeting of November 15, 2021 of the Board of Education to order at 5:01 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus.

Roll call was taken, and all members were present except for Ms. Alcantara and Mr. Das. Mr. Das joined moments later.

Ms. Albrecht asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Ms. Hahn moved that the Board adjourns to closed session for the purpose of 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 the placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students. Ms. Tomlinson seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

II. CLOSED SESSION – 5:00 p.m. – A303

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

Ms. Albrecht recalled the Regular Meeting of November 15, 2021, of the Board of Education to order at 6:38 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Roll call was taken, and all members were present with Ms. Alcantara present via phone.

IV. Minutes

Ms. Albrecht asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 18, 2021 (open and closed session). There was a request by Ms. Hahn for a change to the closed session minutes, which was incorporated. Mr. Dronen moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 18, 2021 (open and closed session), as revised. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, 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 Mr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. There were nine requests for public comment. Ms. Albrecht reminded those speaking to keep their comments to three minutes or less per Board Policy 2:230.

1. Ms. Julia Atkins, alum and future New Trier parent, shared comments on adviser room.
2. Ms. Laura Smith, alum, parent, New Trier math teacher and adviser, shared comments on the current and proposed adviser room system.
3. Mr. Kyle Petersen, parent, shared comments on the adviser room system.
4. Mr. Said Aydin, student, shared comments on the reduction of print editions of the New Trier News.
5. Ms. Betsy Hart, member of New Trier Neighbors board, shared an excerpt from one of their newsletters.
6. Ms. Cynthia Anglemeyer, parent, shared comments about transparency.
7. Ms. Annette Beitel, parent of New Trier graduate, shared comments about her child's experience at New Trier.
8. Ms. Amanda Nugent, parent of New Trier graduate, shared comments about gendered adviser rooms. Dr. Sally clarified during her comments that changes to the adviser program would take place with the Class of 2026, the incoming freshmen.
9. Ms. Paige Edwards, parent, shared comments on the gendered adviser room.

VI. Special Orders of Business

A. Report 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:

- Parent Teacher Conferences took place last week using Meet the Teacher software. Feedback has largely been positive from both faculty and parents.
- First quarter grades came out and parents have access to those.
- Mr. Waechtler shared the various Monthly Observances around campus. They include a LGBTQ Origami Butterfly Pride Display (hallway near the library) and Girls Club, who decorated three mannequins for each observance (Spanish speaking, LGBTQ+, and Indigenous peoples). The library also had a display of various literature available for each monthly observance.
- Mr. Waechtler thanked Ms. Gail Gamrath, Northfield Campus Assistant Principal, for her work on the EKG Screening held on October 26th and October 27th. Slightly under 600 students participated and six of those students were encouraged to see their primary physician for monitoring, while three of those students were asked to make an appointment with a cardiologist for additional testing.
- Tri Ship is holding their Annual Canned Food Drive from November 1st through December 1st.
- Girls Club raised almost \$7000 for the New Trier Scholarship Fund by selling various merchandise. One of which was wrapping paper that was displayed on the monthly observances' mannequins.
- An adviser room Tug of War took place. Mr. Evan Hsieh's, Math Department Faculty, adviser room won as did Ms. Hannah Hsieh's, Science Department Faculty, adviser room.
- The class of 2026 are taking their 8th Grade Placement Tests on either November 13th or December 4th.

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

- She thanked parents and faculty for adjusting to online parent teacher conferences. She has received good feedback on them.

- Ms. Hilerre Kirsch, Music and Theatre Department Faculty, oversaw the production of Silent Sky in the Hayes-McCausland Theatre.
- Mrs. Dubravec thanked Ms. Stacy Kolack, Student Activities Coordinator, and Student Council for the activities they put together for Halloween. Staff also participated in a pumpkin decorating contest.
- Trevian Games took place with staff versus students in games of bags during the lunch periods. Ms. Kerri Simons, Modern and Classical Languages Department Faculty, along with other staff have tried to find ways for staff to connect with students.
- Student Council put together a Veteran’s Day ceremony as well as a display wall of family members as well as staff who have served.
- Fall sports are concluding with the tennis team taking second in State. Girls and boys cross country teams excelled at sectionals with boys taking fourth in State. Mr. Nicholas Falk, student, had a school history record in the three-mile of 14 minutes and 14 seconds, taking second overall. Field Hockey took first as well as the girls swim team.
- Athletics also hosted a college signing day for about 20 students.
- The weigh-lifting club that participates in the United States Throwdown won for the third year in a row. The club is sponsored by Mr. Jim Davis, Athletic Coordinator for Strength and Conditioning.

Mr. Tragos provided an update on the Illinois School Report Card for the previous school year, 2020-2021. The Report Card includes assessment data as well as a summative designation or rating for each school. Other data includes student and teacher demographics, graduation rate, district finances, among others. It monitors how each district is progressing towards a wide range of educational goals. The District is also able to report its progress to the community. Typically, at the November Board meeting, Mr. Tragos presents a full report with an analysis of the metrics. Due to Covid, assessment data from last year is delayed. Instead of one date where data is released, there will be three over the course of the year. The data that was released at the end of October does not include metrics that rely on assessment data or standardized tests or that report academic progress. Demographic information such as number of students, attendance rates, school finances, among others are available now. The second release of data will be on December 2nd, which will be preliminary assessment data. This includes standardized test data such as SAT, English Language Arts and Math proficiency. It will only be available at the district level as no state data will be available yet. The third and final release will be in April. Summative ratings will not be available for the 20-21 school year. As the data becomes available, Mr. Tragos will report to the Board similar to previous years and will analyze the data providing perspective and context for New Trier students as well as in relation to peer districts.

Mr. Johnson gave the FOIA report, noting that there were five requests since the last Board meeting, all have been closed. They include requests regarding construction records, grade distribution, vendor contracts and two pertaining to instructional materials.

***B. Annual Plan Update: Adviser Gender Structure**

Dr. Sally began by noting that this initiative is part of the yearly goals found in the Annual Plan which the Board approved in July. He quoted the Annual Plan, saying “that the current gender structure of adviser rooms does not meet the needs of every student and is, in fact, the most difficult part of the day for some students. We want the program to serve all students and give them a strong community from which to thrive at New Trier.”

Mrs. Dubravec began by stating the presentation would provide a historical overview of the adviser room and examine its current structure. The District has heard from some students, parents, and staff that the current structure of a single gender adviser room does not provide a culture of belonging for all students. Others have shared how the existing structure has benefitted students. The team presenting has spent much time over the past several years reviewing the historical role of the adviser program, collecting data from many stakeholders both formally and informally and reviewed several different proposals that address the need to provide a culture of belonging to everyone within the adviser program. The proposal presented is the best entry point to that change beginning with the Class of 2026. The plan is to also gather feedback, review and make changes as needed.

The adviser program began in 1928 under the leadership of Mr. F.E. Clerk and has become a cornerstone of the New Trier experience. Over the years, the District has researched what other schools are doing that is similar to adviser room, however, it’s been found that these schools have more of a homeroom model that focuses on logistics, attendance taking and school-wide announcements. The adviser program is unique in that it is meant to promote a four-year connection between the school and families, between students and adults and between students and their peers. Adviser room creates connections, a sense of belonging, and helps students with their personal and academic growth. Mrs. Dubravec introduced the team, which included herself along with Ms. Sue Ellen Haak and Mr. Mark

Howard, Freshmen Adviser Chairs; Ms. Julie Smith and Mr. Ted Koulentes, Sophomore Adviser Chairs; Ms. Trish Sheridan and Mr. Greg Segó, Junior Adviser Chairs; Ms. Susie Paunan and Mr. Chris Pearson, Senior Adviser Chairs; Mr. Scott Williams and Ms. Gail Gamrath, Assistant Principals; and Mr. Waechtler.

Mrs. Dubravec shared comments on how relationships matter in a culture of belonging. A key metric for student success is the nature and quality of student-to-student relationships and student-to-adult relationships. New Trier prides itself, first and foremost, on being a relationship institution and educational research supports this emphasis. A student's sense of belonging is the critical factor in a host of positive academic learning and social emotional outcomes. Regarding student-to-student relationships, 98% of alumni reported that they had at least one friend who cared about them in high school. The same percentage of alumni reported that they had at least one or more adults who cared about them in high school while 89% said they had an adult they could go to with a problem.

Ms. Sheridan shared a graphic that showed how the adviser program has evolved and intersects with important developmental moments in the lives of students. The program has provided time and space to develop the skills, habits, and dispositions that New Trier wants students to possess when they graduate. A guiding principle of the program has been driven by considering the New Trier motto. The adviser program also supports and engages in current District initiatives. It also works explicitly and implicitly at each grade level on various themes. Above all, the program aims to provide an inclusive environment. The role of the adviser is a critical component of the program. The Adviser Framework was developed in 2018 to better define the unique nature of this professional work. The adviser is a central figure in a student's four-year experience and Ms. Sheridan went on to state the variety of ways that an adviser supports their students. While there is discussion about a shift in the structural makeup of the adviser room community, the commitment remains to provide a quality experience for every student.

Mr. Koulentes presented on the research that has taken place over the last several years. He began by thanking the Board and administration for their encouragement and support as the team has looked for ways to make a special program even better for students. This work began six years ago with a comprehensive assessment in partnership with an outside agency and concluded with an internal inquiry specific to the gender structure of the adviser program. In 2015, the District worked with Hanover Research and the entire process took three years to complete. Hanover began with a literature review on adviser room programs across the country, while many schools have a named adviser room, they could not find anything that compares to what is done at New Trier. Hanover then surveyed students, parents and staff and also conducted focus groups in order to gain more insight into the program's benefits and areas of growth. In Hanover's survey, there were no questions around the gender structure, however, one of the larger themes to emerge from the focus groups was that pedagogical and personal benefits of a single gender system needed further review. Hanover conducted another literature review on this topic but was unable to find much research on gender specific advising.

Mr. Koulentes then provided feedback from the focus groups on the perceived benefits and drawbacks of gender-specific adviser rooms. Last year, adviser chairs created a survey for not only advisers, but then junior and senior students about their adviser room experience. Focus groups were also conducted. Next, Mr. Segó shared the student feedback. He provided an explanation of why juniors and seniors were only selected to participate. There was roughly a 40% response rate of the 2,000 juniors and seniors. There was a near 50/50 balance between those seeking change and those who desire to maintain the status quo, which was a common theme that emerged in much of the surveying that was done. Further study of the data noted that students currently in a girls adviser room, responded 11 to 9, that their preference would be to engage in a mixed gender adviser room. While 3 out of 5 students in male adviser rooms responded that they wanted to continue in the current single gender adviser room. Faculty who were advisers last school year were also surveyed, and responses were received from just over half. When asked if they wanted to see the adviser program continue in its single gender structure, a slim majority signified their support of this, however, more than 2 in 5 expressed a desire for change to best meet the needs of students. In the follow-up question, the overwhelming majority of advisers expressed their desire to continue in the role if the adviser program were to change from the single gender model. Regarding student focus groups, about 70 students expressed their desire to participate. Mr. Segó noted that those students seeking change were far more likely to express desire to engage in the focus group discussions. In recognizing this imbalance, another opportunity was offered for those who wanted to maintain the status quo to reengage in that discussion so that their voices could be heard.

Mr. Waechtler shared the vision of the program for the future, noting that regardless of the make-up of the adviser room, students will still experience the core of the adviser program. Beginning with the class of 2026, current eighth graders, families will have three choices. The first is no preference and New Trier would place the student in either a mixed grouping or single gender adviser room. This would be determined based on staffing as well as the choice of

their peers. By selecting this preference, families are helping to provide the school with flexibility to create the appropriate amount of each type of adviser room. Another choice is a mixed grouping adviser room where advisees and the adviser would be of any gender. The last choice is a single gender adviser room, which is a traditional model, with advisees and the adviser being of the same gender. For all of these models, the school will work with students and honor their gender identity as has been done in the past. Another key part of this choice is that these are four-year assignments, so the adviser room will remain together until they graduate in 2026. Any choice that students make will provide a great experience for the student because the core of the adviser program does not change based on the make-up of the room.

Ms. Gamrath shared that the school will begin to welcome the class of 2026 in January as they attend Academic Life Night and All About the Electives as well as when New Trier visits the sender schools. Students will submit their adviser room preference at the end of February. In May, students and families will receive confirmation of which adviser room configuration their child will participate in. If there is a change of mind, this is the time to have those conversations. During June, Mr. Howard and Ms. Haak spend time placing students into adviser rooms with students and families receiving the names of their adviser and senior helper in July. Ms. Gamrath noted that this is a student decision with helpful guidance from their family. She reiterated there is no wrong decision.

Ms. Smith noted that as this moves forward, there will continue to be routine review of the adviser program to ensure its goals are being met. This feedback will be gathered through formal and informal methods. Feedback will also be gathered from the class of 2026 and subsequent classes to reflect on their four-year experience in their specific grouping. Ms. Gamrath and Mr. Williams then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen thanked the committee, staff, parents, and students who had input on this report and noted that providing a choice for single or mixed group adviser room is a good result. He then inquired how a student would be placed if they select no preference. Ms. Gamrath responded that numbers would be evaluated and those selecting no preference would be placed in order to even out the groups. Any notes from the family or the eighth-grade team would also be used to determine placement.

Mr. Dronen then inquired if a student will be able to make a change if they feel they have made a choice they are no longer comfortable with. Ms. Gamrath replied that even in the system the school has now, when an issue arises, the assistant principals and adviser chairs work hard to make it a comfortable and safe room where it is. Due to community building and the four-year trajectory of the room, the school tries hard not to make changes. Families should go in to the process with the intent that the student stays through their four years, however, if an issue arises that needs a change, those individual situations are addressed.

Mr. Dronen mentioned that there was a disparity in the survey between male (60%) and female (44%) who favor single gender over the mixed adviser group. He inquired if that was correct, and Mr. Segó replied that it was. Mr. Dronen asked for more information on the discrepancy. Mr. Segó noted that the question was phrased that if a student was to restart their high school experience again, how would they prefer to restart it. Sixty percent of boys replied that they would prefer to stay in the same single gender model, while 44% of females said they would prefer to stay in that model. While not knowing exactly what to contribute that to, the hope is that there are some students who select no preference. If students made choices based on the responses in the survey, there will be an imbalance with the mixed gender rooms. Those with no preference will allow the school to balance the rooms between male and female as well as across the spectrum.

Mr. Dronen noted that the adviser feedback was that 50% were in favor of while 42% opposed seeing the program continue in its current single gender structure. Mr. Dronen asked for further feedback such as pro and con comments from advisers who are most familiar with the program. Mr. Dronen then inquired if the survey went beyond just the two questions and tried to elicit more opinions. Mr. Segó responded that 58% of advisers said they would when posed with the question, "would you prefer to see the adviser program continue in its current model." He noted that this question was limiting in the way it was set up. Mr. Segó provided additional information around this, noting that adviser feedback included comments where they wanted to see change, but since context for the change was not given, it was difficult for them to answer.

Mr. Dronen referenced the parent survey, which Mr. Segó responded was done by Hanover, and there was no further surveying of parents done by adviser chairs. Mr. Dronen noted that it is unknown the percentage of parents who were in favor of one or the other. Mr. Williams spoke to the Hanover survey, noting that there were not specific questions about the gender structure, however, that topic was part of the conversation with parent focus groups.

Regarding IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) students with more significant needs, Mr. Dronen inquired if participation in a mixed grouping adviser room is seen as a big benefit as far as inclusiveness and placement in the least restricted environment. Ms. Gamrath shared that the hope is that both structures would support those students equally and in different ways. Dr. Sally agreed that it will be supportive along with parents and students determining what may be best for where the student is at.

Lastly, Mr. Dronen inquired about the cost from Mr. Johnson. While cost has not yet been looked at, Mr. Johnson noted that typically there are 160 adviser rooms, and the District expects the same number again. District funds are allocated for professional development and conferences and some of those funds will be focused on making sure advisers are prepared for this transition.

Ms. Hahn thanked the team and those who participated as well as those who shared public comments or reached out to the Board with their perspective. She noted New Trier's long-standing tradition of excellence, noting it is not taken for granted and the District continually examines that excellence. At the same time, the District does not change for the sake of change and innovation. She shared further comments noting that striking a balance for students in this current climate is something that she struggles with. Ms. Hahn asked to hear further about the function that the gender structure plays in achieving the mission of the adviser program.

Ms. Hahn then shared her concern about the introduction of choice. She noted the overwhelm that parents face with all the choices for their freshman student. While New Trier does an excellent job and has improved, such as by visiting the sender schools, adding one element of choice and one that, hopefully will last all four years, is another pressure point for families and students. When the element of choice is introduced, there is the personal responsibility from the outcome going well. She inquired how students will be supported in their choices. She went on to ask if the various choices are available as the school does not want to go too quickly to just mixed gender adviser rooms. Dr. Sally responded that the system will evolve over the next five years. He went on to say that much is put on the adviser program but encouraged families and students to think about the relationship as there are many relationships around the school that are positive which are not based in gender. He noted that students will have a great experience no matter their choice and that there is not a wrong answer. Reducing the worry around this decision, he emphasized that this is a low stakes decision for families as their student will experience the core of the program. In response to not moving to all mixed gender, Mr. Waechtler commented that about 50% of students felt they benefited from their single gender adviser room which could, potentially, take something away from them.

Ms. Hahn noted that her understanding is that the school has been running a mixed gender adviser room pilot. Dr. Sally responded that while there is not a pilot going on, adviser rooms have paired up, which Mr. Williams confirmed and shared further comments about.

Ms. Alcantara commented on the choice aspect with some students reporting being more comfortable with students of their own gender. She went on to question whether it is a comfort zone that is a good thing to engender and continue fostering given that the world beyond New Trier is not a single gender situation. Her belief is that having the mixed gender adviser rooms will and should foster the ability for students to learn from students of various gender identities and they can, in fact, form close relationships and feel comfortable engaging with a group of people who are not necessarily all one gender. Ms. Alcantara noted this was admirable and important to pursue.

Ms. Tomlinson thanked those for their work over the years in figuring out how the adviser system can better help students as well as help deliver part of the 2030 Strategic Plan. She was encouraged to see the number of students who weighed in as they are at the center of why the school does this and their voices need to be heard. Ms. Tomlinson went on to share that in looking at the adviser room goals combined with student feedback on their preference for single versus mixed gender and the lack of evidence-based reasoning for separating by gender, that there is a compelling argument for giving students a choice. Ms. Smith answered Ms. Tomlinson's question of how this will be measured if going this direction is a success. Ms. Tomlinson also wanted to make sure that there will be communication between now and February for how a student should think about this choice as they may not know what an adviser room is and what they are choosing.

Ms. Tomlinson then referenced Ms. Nugent's public comment about better supporting students who will not be a part of this incoming group who have a choice. Mr. Williams addressing Ms. Tomlinson's comment about communication, noted that there is an evolution to this and multiple pieces to think through such as the presentation at the Academic Life Nights. Regarding supporting sophomores, juniors, and seniors next year, Mr. Williams shared

that the school will continue to support them in the same way that it has supported all students. He went on to share further comments and brief conversation continued between Mr. Williams and Ms. Tomlinson.

Mr. McLane shared an anecdote about meeting New Trier students while in college and when visiting those friends, seeing what a wonderful experience the adviser system was back then. He decided to move his family to the District so that his children could experience the adviser system. However, it did not work out for them and they found their places in sports or performing arts and worked better for them in the whole of New Trier. While Mr. McLane noted that the adviser system does not define everything, it needs to be addressed and refined. He loved how, collectively; the six-year process unfolded to this outcome. He appreciates the effort put in and loves that fact that there will be a choice. While it would be nice if the choice was available to all sooner, he understands the obstacles.

Mr. McLane then inquired how New Trier compares to its competitive set, specifically, Evanston Township High School, Glenbrook North and South High Schools. Dr. Sally replied that the Hanover survey pointed out that adviser room is a unique program. Regarding surrounding schools, Dr. Sally noted that there are homerooms. Mr. Williams shared an anecdote as well.

Mr. Das shared how impressed he was with the thought that has gone into how to consider adviser room for the future. It is commensurate in weight as the 15-year plan to demolish a 100-year-old gym. He noted that much time has been taken regarding details for the new athletic facility at Winnetka and the same should happen for the adviser system and its infrastructure. He commended those who are doing this work, noting it should be celebrated. After further comments, he noted his appreciation for the parents who shared how they contemplate if they made the right choice by keeping their students on track to attend New Trier. He expressed gratitude for those parents who have provided affirmation and are invested in seeing an improved future for the school with adviser room being a hallmark of that.

Ms. Albrecht noted the amount of time that has gone into this over the past several years. She shared that, based on her experience with her children, the most important part of adviser room is the four-year continuity, or at least the three-year continuity with the same adviser when at Winnetka. She then shared an anecdote about her time as a room parent for her daughter's adviser room. That experience is what convinced Ms. Albrecht that the adviser system is much deeper than a home room. In looking at the choices in the surveys for advisers and students regarding the number of them who still want the single gender model, Ms. Albrecht's guess is because that is what they know and as time goes on some of their perspectives may change. She encouraged being open and flexible to that. After further comments, she noted that having a choice is a good thing, but it could change when people have fewer experiences with the single gender model over time. She anticipates adjustments as this moves along, particularly with someone who may have made a choice which they ended up not liking.

Mr. Das moved, and Ms. Tomlinson seconded the motion, that the Board affirm the direction presented for the Adviser Gender Structure as stated in the Annual Plan. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

C. 2021-2022 School Year Update

Dr. Sally presented an update on the 2021-2022 school year. He provided an update on Covid, noting that the number of cases is on the rise in Illinois and in the local area. The Covid Response and Community Wellness Team (CRCWT) will meet on Wednesday, which will be an opportunity to speak with the medical professionals to see what is happening in doctor's offices and hospitals. Mitigation efforts will continue. The District also encourages everyone to get a booster shot. Students and staff are also encouraged to stay home when they are sick. He shared that teachers are doing an excellent job in helping students keep up with their work and get the support that they need. Finally, the District will continue its Shield testing program.

Next, Mr. Tragos provided an update on the block schedule. First quarter has focused on understanding the teaching and learning experience for students. The block schedule committee created a student and teacher survey that was administered mid-October. The student feedback went directly to teachers about the learning experience in the classroom. The primary purpose was to engage students in their experience of learning in a block schedule compared

to the schedule they learned in before. The October professional development days were then used to analyze that feedback and adjust the learning environment and curriculum. Teachers also submitted feedback to the committee, which is being analyzed and a report will be shared with staff and administration as well as the Board. Next steps include a survey for students, staff and parents as well as conducting focus groups. Then recommendations will be prepared for the 2022-2023 school year. Questions and comments were then invited from the Board.

Ms. Albrecht noted that it will be good to conduct the surveys after a more normal year to see how the block schedule is influencing the school.

Mr. McLane inquired if the District would start to color code its Covid dashboard, to which Dr. Sally responded that it would be taken to CRCWT on Wednesday in terms of how the school enhances the information on the dashboard related to the other metrics.

***D. 2022-2023 School Year Calendar**

Dr. Sally noted that with the block schedule under review, the bell schedule still needs to be determined for the 2022-2023 school year, however, now is the time to approve the school calendar for the upcoming year. It is a skeletal calendar with students starting on August 22nd. Without the bell schedule, there are many days that need to wait until that is determined such as the early dismissal/late start days, parent-teacher conferences, among others. Holidays, graduation, winter break and spring break dates are set and were done in partnership with the sender schools and elementary districts, so they align for families.

Ms. Hahn moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the 2022-2023 school year calendar, as presented. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

Dr. Sally noted that the calendar would be posted to the website.

E. Summer School Report

Mr. Scott Williams, Assistant Principal for Student Services and Mr. Mike Lee, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services, presented the 2021 summer school report. They provided highlights, noting that summer school returned closer to pre-pandemic times. Remote classes were offered, specifically in Civics and Consumer Seminar with a larger portion of the program dedicated to school year completion. More resources were devoted to that in order to help bring closure to the school year for students who still needed to complete assignments to obtain a grade.

Mr. Lee shared enrollment numbers, noting difficulty in comparing this year's enrollment to the previous year due to the way that athletic enrollment was handled. Numbers this summer were slightly down from last summer with a total enrollment of 2,301. While academic enrollment was lower compared to last summer, enrichment courses were significantly higher, due to the new English Writing Workshop. Mr. Lee suggested instead of comparing to the summer of 2020, comparisons should be made to summer school 2019. Academic and enrichment courses were significantly higher from two summers ago, which could be due to remote options offered and the English writing course. As usual, sophomores made up the majority of the program at almost 50%. In terms of total number of students enrolled, about 47% of the total student body participated in the program which included academic, enrichment and athletic courses.

Mr. Williams shared financials, noting that the program's goal is to break-even. The complexities of Covid as well as predicting where enrollment numbers would be played in the overall financial picture of the program this year. Summer school earned \$165,000 which was attributed to several factors. One was the shifts made in the program, such as families registering first, and collecting money later. A better partnership was also developed with Mr. Johnson and the business office to collect fees. Larger enrollment was also allowed for remote classes. The significantly higher enrollment in the enrichment English courses also attributed to the bottom line.

Mr. Lee shared plans for the summer of 2022 and adjustments that are planned. Due to the construction project at the Winnetka campus, the majority of the summer school program will be moved to the Northfield campus. This will

present its own challenges such as lab space. The new registration process will continue. Work will also continue with department leaders to ensure that the courses offered, especially the time slots, make the most sense for families as well as historical enrollment to minimize the need to cancel courses. Mr. Williams added that the \$50 registration fee will be eliminated as the program's finances can absorb it and it is one less complexity to navigate. The plan is to also keep costs neutral for next year. Mr. Williams then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. Dronen inquired of Mr. Johnson if the surplus money is placed back in the general operating budget. Mr. Johnson replied that it goes into overall District reserves which supports the program next year. Some years there are surpluses, while others there are deficits, and the District looks to even that out over time.

Ms. Hahn thanked Mr. Williams and Mr. Lee for their continued flexibility in the face of Covid while continuing to provide a quality experience for students. She then inquired about Civics, noting its popularity during the summer as it can be difficult for students to fit it into their schedule. Ms. Hahn noted that her understanding is that the school has innovated more ways to fit Civics into a student's schedule throughout the school year and inquired if a decrease in interest in summer school has been seen. Mr. Williams replied that this is the fourth summer running Civics and he has only seen the enrollment numbers increase. She then inquired if students are still struggling to find a time to take it or if summer is the preferred option. Mr. Tragos responded that students are finding more opportunities to take it and they will have more selections next year with the new course proposals that have one semester options. Though for many students, taking standard graduation requirements such as Civics during the summer is part of their four-year academic planning.

Ms. Hahn then noted that there seems to be a fairly significant increase in the number of seniors who participated in summer school and inquired if that was attributed to the challenges of pandemic learning. Mr. Williams replied that it was not graduating seniors, but rather juniors who are now seniors. He noted that there was higher enrollment with the credit recovery courses.

Ms. Albrecht noted that lab availability at the Northfield campus was mentioned during the presentation and inquired how many science sections the school could have with labs. Mr. Lee shared his experience as Science Department Chair during the west side construction project. He noted they were able to run all labs at Northfield with adjustments. Mr. Johnson added that, if needed, a lab could run at Winnetka. Discussion continued between Ms. Albrecht and Mr. Lee.

F. Facilities Update: Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project

Mr. Johnson provided an update on the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project. He noted that the agenda would cover the Gates Gym commemorative events, maintaining opportunities for students during construction and the bid period results.

Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications, began by sharing the three events that will commemorate the Gates Gym during *A December to Remember*. The first is a community-wide event on December 4th at noon and is prior to the girls and boys varsity basketball games. Student ambassadors will be available to give tours of the campus. On December 12th, the New Trier Winter Music Festival will be held in the Gates Gym for the last time. Due to the number of students who are participating in the festival, capacity will be limited to performers and their families. The event will be livestreamed. On December 16th, the Athletic department will host their Athletic Hall of Honor Induction and Alumni Night. Inductees will be honored between the girls and boys varsity basketball games. These will be the last official games played in the space which will be against Evanston Township High School. Information on the events can be found on the District's website. Ms. Lia Kass, Communications Coordinator, started a social media campaign with yearbook pictures through the decades of activities in the Gates. Ms. Dizon went on to share further information.

Next, Mr. Andy Butler, Kinetic Wellness Department Chair and Mr. Jim Burnside, Assistant Athletic Director, spoke on maintaining opportunities for students during construction. Mr. Butler shared that Mr. Augie Fontanetta, Athletic Director, would have liked to have attended the meeting but was recovering from hip replacement surgery. Mr. Butler went on to share that Mr. Johnson and Mr. Conway were instrumental in helping with the 15-year plan to update existing facilities to create opportunities for students during construction. He feels confident that the school will be able to offer all programming for athletics and kinetic wellness (KW) classes. Mr. Butler walked through different gym spaces and how they were adapted to better provide these opportunities. Mr. Burnside then shared specifics regarding the various athletic seasons. Mr. Butler shared about location changes for strength and conditioning, Booster Club intramurals and KW classes. Other information shared pertained to locker rooms, the

temporary weight room, cardio center, updates made to the Northfield gyms and conducting strength training outdoors. Mr. Johnson noted that messaging will go out to families regarding logistics. Mr. McLane credited Mr. Butler and Mr. Burnside for their creativity and flexibility with Ms. Albrecht sharing that the updates look great.

Mr. Johnson then shared about the Bid Group Two results, noting that the District has carefully managed the budget of \$75.3 million which was established in February 2021 before inflation. Since costs were projected to rise, the District has worked with its architects to adapt the design to alleviate some of these increases while carefully making sure that the right materials and design are selected. The District is also bidding deductive alternates if further cost adjustments are needed. These are more difficult decisions which will be brought to the Board if needed.

Bid results were received for Bid Group Two which is the second of three large bid packages. The package included seven trades and each large trade had five to eight bidders with smaller specialty trades having two bidders. The total amount awarded for the project is \$20,895,274 along with \$863,492 for the Grounds Garage which is part of the 15-year plan. Mr. Johnson noted that the remainder of the project is out to bid now, and the results will be presented at the December Board meeting along with a complete budget update. Currently, there is cautious optimism that this is headed in the right direction in the budget but results from next month will provide a better picture of where the project is at. Mr. Johnson went on to highlight some of the trades that were bid such as demolition, concrete, and steel. Some bids were withdrawn for a variety of reasons.

Mr. Johnson shared a brief project budget update, noting that \$34,945,871 is committed to date of the \$75.3 million. The percentage will increase once the third bid package comes back and is estimated to be 57% of construction costs. There is also a 5% construction contingency as well as an owner's contingency, which are funds being maintained for the unexpected. Other project contracts are on the consent agenda for approval and include asbestos abatement, which is bid separately by law and is managed by the District as an owner cost. The total cost is \$408,000 which is about \$100,000 less than the budget.

The District is also instituting a new type of insurance program called Owner Controlled Insurance Program (OCIP) which provides enhanced coverage to the District and uses its buying power to buy insurance rather than having each contractor bring their own liability to the project. By buying it centrally, better pricing can be obtained. The total cost is \$972,930.

Next, Mr. Johnson shared that the District would purchase different flooring materials via cooperatives and will be included in bid package three budget. It includes specialty and general flooring that will be purchased through a non-profit co-op rather than bidding. They have already been bid by the co-ops and the District is allowed to use those bids to purchase the material. This allows the District to obtain a better price than bidding on its own. By locking in now, it ensures that the District can get the samples it needs so they can be used for LEED testing in order to certify the building. It also allows the District to be in the queue so it can get the materials in a timely fashion due to supply chain issues as well as lock in pricing. The total cost of the flooring will be \$1,919,000. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. McLane asked that this not be overly value engineered with aesthetics being thrown out. He suggested that if there is the potential to overly cut costs and cut some of the beauty of the building, he thought perhaps the District could come back to the Board to increase funds. Mr. Johnson replied that lessons were learned during the last project about where cuts can be made that will not compromise the quality, appearance, durability, and benefit to students. Mr. Johnson shared further details, noting that the District would come back to the Facilities Steering Committee, Finance Committee and the Board if needed before any major decisions were made.

Ms. Albrecht shared comments about lessons learned during the west side construction project. She went on to note the relief of bid package two numbers given the uncertainty of inflation and supply chain issues. She then shared comments about bid package three and inquired about the timing to build in alternates, which Mr. Johnson replied is typically 90 days, though some could be extended. He also shared comments about steel which came in more than expected, but less than a worst-case scenario. He noted that there are about 20 trades in bid package three. Ms. Albrecht commented that the District has worked with most, if not all, of the trade companies in the past. Mr. Johnson shared that due to the public bidding method, the District has to pick the lowest bidder, though the District was pleased as it has worked with many of them before.

Ms. Alcantara departed the meeting at 8:40 p.m., partially through this presentation.

***G. Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project Bid Package #2 Prime Trade Award**

Mr. McLane moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the award of Prime Trade Agreements for the East Side Academic and Athletic Facility project listed in the Bid Results section and the Bid Period 2 Construction Contingency. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

A YE: Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

ABSENT: Ms. Alcantara

The motion passed.

VII. Administrative Items

A. Treasurer's Report for October 2021

Mr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for October 2021. The fund balances in all accounts totaled \$174,001,099. Interest continues to be minimal with 14 basis points for short term investments and 89 basis points for long term ones. There are significant local receipts from property taxes as well as continued regular state and federal payments on the revenue side. Historical balances are returning to normal for this time of year, which can be seen on last page of the report.

B. Financial Reports for October 2021

Mr. Johnson presented the Financial Reports for October 2021. Operating revenue was \$53,957,226 for the first four months of the fiscal year, or 5.35% higher compared to last year. Property tax distributions continued this month, and year-to-date revenues overall are now consistent with last year. Other local sources will maintain a year-long positive variance now that normal student programming has resumed. The adopted budget for operating revenue is 5.34% higher than last year.

On the expenditures side, the District was at \$34,213,000 through October, or 3.58% higher than last year inclusive of the interfund transfers. As was the case with revenue, categories that experienced a large reduction in FY21 are once again seeing expenses, such as transportation costs. There is some variance on the supplies side as last year the District was buying items due to Covid such as plexiglass and cleaning supplies, and while that continues, the purchases are not occurring at the same time. The adopted budget for expenditures is slightly higher than last year. Mr. Johnson shared that the bond sale is tomorrow for the \$10 million in DSEB bonds for the East Side Academic and Athletic Project which the Board has authorized. Mr. Johnson will update the Finance Committee and the Board on the results of the bond sale. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Albrecht noted that with the property tax collection, the District is caught up to same point as last year, which Mr. Johnson confirmed.

***C. 2021 Preliminary Tax Levy**

Mr. Johnson presented the 2021 Preliminary Tax Levy. This is the time of the year when the District starts its budget and planning process for next year. The levy will be placed on display tomorrow and at the December Board meeting, there will be a public hearing and the adoption of the final levy. The levy is based on the 2021 extension times the 2020 CPI of 1.4% plus the estimated value of tax revenue from new property. The 2021 levy funds the second half of the 2021-22 school year and the first half of the 2022-23 school year. Mr. Johnson then shared details about tax caps and the Consumer Price Index (CPI), noting that the December 31, 2020 CPI was 1.4%. He went on to share information relating to new property. The average homeowners should see an increase of less than 1.4% for the New Trier portion of their tax bill. In the winter, Cook County will send a bill to taxpayers for 55% of the previous year tax bill with the remainder of the 2022 tax bill due in the fall. This is also the first year of a new law that went into effect that allows the District to recapture the amount that was refunded over prior years. The District is waiting for more information from the county clerk about the change in law and the impact on the levy. Mr. Johnson will update the Finance Committee and the Board once he receives that information.

Next, Mr. Johnson shared what the levy dollars support such as a continued commitment to excellence in education, a deep and broad curriculum tailored to individual student interests and needs, a robust student services program, an extracurricular program that encourages high levels of student participation, and competitive salaries to attract and retain top faculty and staff. The District is proud to have a strong history of balanced budgets. After the 2003 referendum, the District committed to five years of no referendum, a commitment that has extended to 18 years. Mr.

Johnson noted that the District also has appropriate reserves and shared the benefits of them. The levy increase will help the District to fund expenses that have increased. The levy will play a key part in allowing the District to present a balanced budget for next year as well as allow for the District to continue to provide excellent student programming and support while being strong stewards of taxpayer dollars. Mr. Johnson thanked the community and the Board for their continued support as well. He then invited questions and comments.

Ms. Hahn wanted to clarify in regard to the public act that it is a supplemental levy to collect refunds that would be imposed automatically, it does not just allow the District to do so, rather it just happens. Mr. Johnson confirmed this and went on to share further details.

Ms. Albrecht thanked Mr. Johnson, Mr. Spiwak, and their team for their strong financial stewardship. Mr. Johnson also thanked Mr. Spiwak for his work.

Mr. Das moved, and Ms. Hahn seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the 2021 Tentative Levy in the amount of \$113,900,095 and that a Public Hearing be held at the December 13, 2021 regularly scheduled Board Meeting. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

ABSENT: Ms. Alcantara

The motion passed.

***D. New Trier Educational Support Professionals Contract FY 22 – FY 26**

Mr. Johnson presented the New Trier Educational Support Professionals Contract for fiscal years 2022–2026. The District has reached a tentative agreement with the New Trier Educational Support Professionals Association (NTESPA). The Association represents about 180 staff members who play a vital role in supporting students and welcoming the community. These roles include security, classroom assistants, office staff, technology employees, and health services as well as other specialized positions. The negotiation process was a chance to address topics related to communications, equity, training, evaluations, workload, benefit time, and school closings/inclement weather, among others in a problem-solving and thoughtful manner. Finances were also addressed, and a new salary plan structure was implemented that meets the needs of the employees and is financially responsible for the District and taxpayers.

Mr. Johnson noted that wages were looked at in three ways. The first was to improve starting wages for positions, particularly those that made less than \$20/hour such as security and instructional assistants as well as nurses. Second, comps showed that the District was in the bottom quartile compared to peer districts, and it was difficult to hire qualified staff to support students. Finally, the District also worked to acknowledge the professional growth and experience of its mid-and late career staff members. The new structure provides for an off-schedule model, meaning starting wages are set. Wages for current employees then go up each year by a negotiated amount in the first two years, and then are tied to CPI for the last three years so they can be more responsive to inflationary trends. This will help the District keep wages up in a way that they did not in the previous agreement, which had fixed wages over five years that were losing value over time.

The increases are provided for in the existing budget and will be incorporated into long term financial projections. The District is fortunate to have a highly experienced, dedicated, and caring support staff who are focused on supporting students and the school. This agreement was a time for the District to focus on maintaining a strong working relationship and making sure that New Trier is competitive in a rapidly changing market, particularly for workers who may have a choice to work at a school or in the private sector. Mr. Johnson noted that engaging in these negotiations is important and tough work and went on to acknowledge those who participated in the process. The Association team was comprised of Ms. Cathy Sulkowski, Mathematics Department Assistant; Ms. Ursula Gruber, Special Education Instructional Assistant; Mr. Jean Cayemite, Campus Security; Mr. Eric Johnson, Instructional Technology Specialist; and Ms. Sarah Kropski, Music and Theatre Project Specialist. The District was represented by Mr. McLane, who needed to step off the team and Ms. Hahn took his place, Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources, Mr. Waechtler and Mr. Johnson. He shared concluding thoughts and then invited comments and questions from the Board.

Ms. Hahn shared her pride in the agreement and thanked those who were responsible for participating in it. She went on to note that it recognizes the contributions of these indispensable members of the New Trier family. Ms. Hahn also recognized that there is a wide array of occupations, each and every one of which, is vital to the functioning of New Trier and the educational experience of students. Financially, she shared, it recognizes these employees' contributions and is a fair rate to them and to taxpayers as well. It also allows the District the flexibility to adjust to market concerns and stay competitive. This ability to adapt allows for security for employees and flexibility for the District. She went on to share her observations of the dedication of the support staff team, not only striking a good deal for their members, but for improving the environment at New Trier for students and everybody. She noted their commitment to being a part of the process, not only in their jobs, but in the overall functioning and governing of the school. They are some of the most public facing jobs in the school and contribute to everybody's experience. Ms. Hahn went on to thank them for their dedication, commitment, and looks forward to the work ahead under this new agreement.

Mr. McLane thanked Ms. Hahn for stepping in when he had to step off the negotiations team. He noted that from his early glimpse at the process and the team, that it was impressive, thoughtful, and thorough as well as well-guided from the administrative side. The outcome is indicative of the deep appreciation for what the many different educational support professionals do for students. He thanked all who participated, particularly the association representatives who put so much time into this with a great outcome.

Mr. Dronen echoed Mr. McLane's and Ms. Hahn's comments. He thanked the educational support professionals for the great job that they do as the school would not function without them. He noted that parents and students appreciate these professionals.

Ms. Albrecht shared that she sat on the negotiations team for the previous contract. She noted the Covid influence and pieces related to that. She also noted that the time commitment and dedication is appreciated. Ms. Albrecht shared that it was good to have New Trier back in the top quartile of competitive compensation and to recognize the excellence of the support staff. She thanked everyone for their work.

Ms. Hahn moved, and Mr. McLane seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the New Trier Educational Support Professionals FY 22 – FY 26 agreement, as presented. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Mr. Das, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

ABSENT: Ms. Alcantara

The motion passed.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- Bill List for the Period, October 1 – 31, 2021
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Resignation, Stipends – Appointments and Stipends – Separation)
- Approve and award contracts to EHC Industries for \$315,000 and Hygieneering Inc. for \$93,100 for the Asbestos Abatement and Professional Services related to the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project
- New Course Proposals
- Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding with the New Trier Education Foundation regarding fundraising for Duke Childs Field
- Approve the purchase of the flooring materials as presented subject to final quantity and price negotiations, and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the purchase agreements
- Approve the utilization of an OCIP program and the purchase of the Builder's Risk insurance and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the agreements.

Ms. Albrecht inquired if any members wanted to pull an item off the Consent Agenda, no one chose to do so. Mr. Das moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: Bill List for the Period, October 1 – 31, 2021; Personnel Report (Appointments, Resignation, Stipends – Appointments and Stipends – Separation); Approve and award contracts to EHC Industries for \$315,000 and Hygieneering Inc. for \$93,100 for the Asbestos Abatement and Professional Services related to the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic

Project; New Course Proposals; Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding with the New Trier Education Foundation regarding fundraising for Duke Childs Field; Approve the purchase of the flooring materials as presented subject to final quantity and price negotiations, and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the purchase agreements; Approve the utilization of an OCIP program and the purchase of the Builder's Risk insurance and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the agreements. Ms. Tomlinson seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

ABSENT: Ms. Alcantara

The motion passed.

IX. Board Member Reports

Mr. Das shared that he was unable to attend the October **Booster Club** meeting but looks forward to the meeting tomorrow.

Ms. Hahn thanked Mr. Tragos and the team who allowed Board members to take tours of the school. She noted it was an exceptional experience. It was an opportunity to see how the work done on committees and as a Board translates into the classroom and was invaluable.

Ms. Hahn shared that the **New Trier Educational Foundation (NTEF)** continues to collaborate with the District on the Innovation Hub and planning continues. Planning is also underway for the Alumni Achievement Awards Gala. The hope is to move from a dinner to more of a celebration. They would also like to open it up to the entire New Trier community. The Gala will take place on March 11th at the Renaissance Place.

Mr. Dronen shared that the **Finance Committee** met on November 8th. Topics were covered earlier in the meeting. The committee also discussed the Winnetka Campus West Side refunding bonds.

Mr. Dronen also shared that **True North Educational Cooperative** met on November 10th, formally NSSED. Dr. Kurt Schneider, superintendent, presented on research, legislation and funding that supports the idea that all learners experience improved outcomes when diverse learners have access to the general education environment.

Ms. Albrecht provided an update from the **New Trier Parents' Association (NTPA)** on behalf of Ms. Alcantara. The NTPA met on November 4th. The group discussed the coordination of NTPA's appreciation efforts in providing treats for various subsets of New Trier personnel, the progress and scheduling by Coffee Chairs on grade-specific meetups amongst parents and select New Trier speakers as well as web site updates to NTPA pages. Also, Mr. Burnside and Mr. Butler presented a very informative and detailed overview of where New Trier is with respect to the East Side Winnetka construction project, and the plan for handling student activities, KW, and sports during the ongoing construction. The NTPA appreciated the thorough review and the opportunity to ask follow-up questions. The next meeting is on December 2.

Ms. Albrecht shared that she and Dr. Sally attended the League of Women Voters – Wilmette State of the Village event. It included village and township leaders and is held every two years.

Ms. Tomlinson shared information from the **New Trier Fine Arts Association (NTFAA)** noting that Ms. Elizabeth Bennett, Music and Theatre Department Chair, announced that all performances are in-person. The Winter Music Festival on December 12th will be one of the last events in the Gates Gym. Ticket prices have been eliminated for all performances except for those where New Trier has to recoup the costs of paying for copyright material. Ms. Bennett wanted to make music and theatre more accessible to all. NTFAA donations are down about 50% versus a typical year. They do have a cushion and will still be able to provide support for summer scholarships. Ms. Tomlinson also noted that there was an amazing presentation from a student who was a summer scholar and attended the Boston Conservatory at Berklee for three weeks. On December 2nd, the Book Stall in Winnetka will donate 20% of all proceeds to the NTFAA.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following:

- The Fall Jazz Concert is on November 19th.
- The Winter Play, Cyrano, is on December 3rd and 4th in the McGee Theatre.
- The Frosh/Soph Musical and Workshop will be on December 7th, 8th, and 9th in Cornog.
- December 12th is the Winter Music Festival.
- The next Board meeting is on December 13th.

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

Ms. Albrecht shared an anecdote from time she spent observing an Algebra 2, level 4 class. She thanked Mr. Tragos for arranging it to which Mr. Tragos shared comments.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McLane moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, to adjourn. Upon a voice vote being taken, all members indicated they were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

Cathleen Albrecht, President