

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203
SPECIAL OPEN MEETING SESSION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
May 5, 2025
New Trier Township High School - 7 Happ Road, Northfield, IL 60093
Room C234**

A **Special Meeting** of the Board of Education of New Trier Township High School District 203, Cook County, Illinois was held on Monday, May 5, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present

Ms. Kimberly Alcantara
Mr. Avik Das
Mr. Keith Dronen
Ms. Jean Hahn, President
Ms. Courtney McDonough
Ms. Sally Pofcher
Ms. Sally Tomlinson, Vice President

Administrators Present

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

Also Present

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

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER – 5:30 p.m. – A201A

Ms. Hahn called the Special Meeting of May 5, 2025 of the Board of Education to order at 5:34 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

II. BUSINESS MEETING – Open Session – 5:30 p.m. – C234

III. Minutes and Reports

***A. Regular Meeting of April 14, 2025 (open session)**

Ms. Hahn asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 14, 2025 (open session). There were no requests for changes to the minutes. Ms. McDonough moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 14, 2025 (open session). Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Dronen, Ms. McDonough, Ms. Pofcher, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das

NAY: none

ABSTAIN: Ms. Hahn

The motion passed.

IV. Communications

Ms. Hahn 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 Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications. There were no requests for public comment.

V. Official Canvass of Consolidated Election Results and Dismissal of Current Board

***A. Official Canvass of April 1, 2025 Consolidated Election Results**

Ms. Hahn asked for a motion to approve the Official Canvass of April 1, 2025 Consolidated Election Results. Mr. Dronen moved that the Board of Education approve the official canvass of the April 1, 2025 Consolidated Election Results. Mr. Das seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. McDonough, Ms. Pofcher, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. Hahn

NAY: none

The motion passed.

B. Recognition/Presentation of Gifts to Outgoing Member; Dismissal of Current Board

Ms. Alcantara, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Pofcher, Mr. Das, Ms. McDonough, and Ms. Hahn all shared their thoughts and stories with Mr. Dronen, thanking him for his mentorship and leadership. Dr. Sally also shared comments thanking Mr. Dronen for his partnership and dedication to the school, noting, in particular, that his vocal support for academic freedom for our departments and teachers was very important for our teachers to hear. Dr. Sally then presented Mr. Dronen with a few small gifts on behalf of the District.

Mr. Dronen then shared the following comments about his time on the Board:

It has been a pleasure to serve on this board these past eight years. It has been an honor and privilege to contribute to the education of our children and the betterment of our community. I want to thank my fellow board members, including those I have served with who have completed their term, the administration, the association, teachers, support staff, caucus, community and, of course, our students for making New Trier such a special place.

I want to thank all board members for your passion for education, expertise, and engagement with New Trier and with our community. During my two terms at New Trier, all members have worked together to do what is best for our students and community. You are a shining example of how good local government can be, putting the interests of our students and community first with no hidden agendas.

New Trier's core values reflect the values of our community, with the vision to develop in every student the skills to lead meaningful, compassionate, and impactful lives. Core values, if they truly are core values, are unaffected by whim or intimidation. We must not forget this and always move forward to fulfil the vision which is what our community expects from us.

While I'm stepping away from this role, my commitment to education and the well-being of all students remains strong. I will continue my work with the Evans Scholars Foundation which sends deserving caddies on full scholarship to 27 Universities, and I recently accepted a trustee position at the American Farm School in Greece, one of the oldest private education institutions in Greece, which has a grade school, high school and college.

Finally, I welcome our new board member, Mr. Lee (Joo Serk Lee). Welcome to the New Trier board. I see Ann and Anastasia in the audience. As all board members know, support from our families is so important to be a board member. Without the support of Ann, I would not have been able to devote the time to being a board member.

***C. Adjournment sine die**

Ms. Tomlinson moved that the current Board adjourn *sine die*. Mr. Das seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Pofcher, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, McDonough, Ms. Hahn

NAY: none

The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned *sine die* at 6:08 p.m. The group then enjoyed a brief break.

VI. Welcome, Oath of Office, and Seating of One Newly-Elected Member and Three Re-Elected Members

A. Oath of Office and Seating of One Newly-Elected Member and Three Re-Elected Members

Ms. Hahn welcomed new Board Member, Mr. Joo Serk Lee, as well as returning members, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, and Ms. Tomlinson. The four members read the oath of office simultaneously.

***B. Election of New Officers for the period May 5, 2025 through April 2026 Regular Meeting**

Board Secretary, Ms. Lindsey Ruston, opened nominations for the office of Board President for the period of May 5, 2025 through the April 2026 Regular Meeting. Mr. Das nominated Ms. Hahn for the office of President of the Board of Education from May 5, 2025 through the April 2026 Regular Meeting. There being no further nominations for President, it was by acclamation that Ms. Hahn was declared the President of the Board from May 5, 2025 through the April 2026 Regular Meeting.

Ms. Hahn asked for nominations for the office of Vice President of the Board of Education for the coming year. Ms. Pofcher nominated Ms. Tomlinson for the office of Vice President of the Board of Education May 5, 2025 through the April 2026 Regular Meeting. Mr. Das seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations for Vice President, it was by acclamation that Ms. Tomlinson was declared the Vice President of the Board from May 5,

2025 through the April 2026 Regular Meeting.

Ms. Hahn asked for nominations for the office of Secretary for the Board of Education for the coming year. Mr. Das nominated Ms. Ruston for the office of Secretary of the Board of Education from May 5, 2025 through the April 2026 Regular Meeting. Ms. Alcantara seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations for Secretary, it was by acclamation that Ms. Ruston was declared the Secretary of the Board from May 5, 2025 through the April 2026 Regular Meeting.

C. Board Liaison Committee Assignments

Ms. Hahn shared the Board Member Committee Liaison Assignments. She thanked the Board for their cooperation and flexibility in agreeing to these assignments.

VII. Administrative Items

*A. Consideration and action on a resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$5,845,000 General Obligation School Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), of the District for the purpose of altering, repairing, renovating and equipping the District's facilities at the Northfield Campus, Winnetka Campus, Transition Center and Duke Childs Field and improving the sites thereof, providing for the pledge of certain revenues to the payment of principal and interest on said bonds and the levy of a direct annual tax sufficient to pay such principal and interest if the pledged revenues are insufficient to make such payment and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof

Dr. Johnson presented this, noting that the Board of Education approved the next phase of the Winnetka Campus North/Tower Building Renovation at the August 19th, 2024 Board meeting, including the financing plan for the project. The North/Tower Building Renovation project will renovate large portions of the North Building on the first floor and the Tower Building on the second floor, improving spaces for science, campus administration and student services. The financing plan called for issuing the bonds in two sales, the first occurring in January 2025 and the second occurring in January 2026. Due to the possible changes in tax law related to a school district's ability to issue tax exempt bonds, the first bond sale was moved from January 2025 to December 2024. For the same reason, the Administration and the District's financial advisor, Ms. Liz Hennessy of Raymond James, recommended that the District prepare to issue the second set of bonds this spring. If school districts are no longer able to issue tax exempt bonds, the cost of issuing this debt would increase by an estimated \$2.5 million. The next set of bonds includes \$4.5 million in Alternate Revenue Bonds and up to \$15 million in DSEB bonds. Originally, the DSEB bond issuance was estimated at \$10 million, but due to inflation and to prepare for unexpected conditions, the resolution will allow the issuance to be up to \$15 million if required. During the March 17th, 2025 Board of Education meeting, a public hearing was held regarding their issuance. Today is the final step, the approval of a bond parameters resolution for each set of bonds, that must be completed before the bonds can be issued. After the passage of these resolutions, the administration will be authorized to issue the bonds and will regularly consult with the Board officers and the District's financial advisor on the timing of the issuance, based on the latest market conditions and possible changes to the tax law.

Ms. Pofcher moved that that the Board approves a resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$5,845,000 General Obligation School Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), of the District for the purpose of altering, repairing, renovating and equipping the District's facilities at the Northfield Campus, Winnetka Campus, Transition Center and Duke Childs Field and improving the sites thereof, providing for the pledge of certain revenues to the payment of principal and interest on said bonds and the levy of a direct annual tax sufficient to pay such principal and interest if the pledged revenues are insufficient to make such payment and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof. Mr. Das seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Mr. Lee, Ms. McDonough, Ms. Pofcher, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Hahn

NAY: none

The motion passed.

*B. Consideration and action on resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$10,500,000 General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds of the District for the purpose of increasing its Working Cash Fund, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof

Ms. Pofcher moved that the Board approves a resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$10,500,000 General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds of the District for the purpose of increasing its Working Cash Fund, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof. Mr. Das seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. Das, Mr. Lee, Ms. McDonough, Ms. Pofcher, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Alcantara, Ms. Hahn

NAY: none

The motion passed.

****VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Hahn asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Das moved, and Ms. Alcantara seconded the motion, to adjourn. Upon a voice vote being taken, all members indicated they were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

Jean Hahn, President