

# BOARD BRIEFS

*News from the New Trier Township High School District 203*

*Board of Education Regular Meeting*

*July 15, 2024*

## Superintendent Search Firm to Seek Community Engagement

New Trier staff, parents, students, and community members will be invited to help shape the search for the school district's next superintendent, the firm leading the search told the Board as it laid out a proposed timeline that anticipates a new superintendent being named in November.

Current Superintendent Paul Sally announced this spring that he intends to retire on June 30, 2025, capping a successful 30-year career at New Trier. The Board has hired the search firm Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) to help lead the recruitment, engagement, and interview process for his successor.

HYA representatives told the Board that the search includes four distinct phases: engagement, recruitment, selection, and transition. For the engagement phase, HYA will run focus groups with numerous key stakeholders, including parent groups, community leaders, former Board members, students, staff, school leaders, recent graduates, and others. The search will also include open staff and community forums.

The firm will help the District create an online community survey to help determine the key skills, dispositions, and attributes New Trier should seek in its next superintendent as well the District's strengths and challenges. HYA will then use all the focus group and survey data to create a Leadership Profile and analysis to present to the Board in September.

Recruitment and advertising will take place from the summer through September 30. HYA will screen applicants throughout the month of September, taking into consideration the Leadership Profile and District strengths and challenges identified by the community. Interview committees will receive a slate of candidates and take part in an interview workshop in early October, with first round and finalist interviews scheduled through the end of that month.

Following the proposed Board selection at their November 18 meeting, the selected candidate will engage with the Board, Sally, and others to prepare for a smooth transition into the role on July 1, 2025. Click for the [Superintendent Search presentation](#).

## Board Approves *New Trier 2030* Annual Plan for 2024-2025 School Year

New Trier operates much differently than it did in 2019 when the Board approved the district's strategic plan, *New Trier 2030*, a roadmap that has guided New Trier to implement successful initiatives and opportunities "to develop in every graduate the skills and dispositions to lead meaningful, compassionate, and impactful lives," Superintendent Paul Sally told the Board.

Taking that mission forward, the Board approved an Annual Plan that will build on the accomplishments of the past five years and advance work in five major categories during the 2024-2025 school year: Graduating Class Teams; Future Programming; Culture, Climate, Equity, and Belonging; Sustainability; and the Superintendent Transition.

Sally said that as the strategic plan crosses its midpoint, the district has balanced the development of innovative, student-centered initiatives with the traditions that make New Trier unique. Just a few of the innovative programs and changes that have enhanced the student and staff experience since 2019 include Graduating Class Teams, online grades, Characteristics of a New Trier Graduate, department equity goals, monthly observances, student voice at Board meetings and in the school, new staff mentorship programs, community-centered publications, alumni events, major facilities projects, hiring outreach and initiatives, and more.

The Annual Plan for 2024-2025 includes continuing work and new initiatives in all six strategic plan framework areas: Intellectual Engagement, Growth, and Readiness; Student Personal Growth; Culture, Climate, Equity, and Belonging; Leadership Throughout the School; Community Engagement, Partnerships, and Governance; and Finance, Facilities, and Human Resources.

Examples of new initiatives include development of future programming and career pathways for students; Student and Staff Belonging Councils; discussion and recommendation for a school cell phone policy; implementation of a new email and text communications system for parents, staff, and the community; unified planning on district sustainability practices; and a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan and safety training for the district.

The Board thanked the administration, staff, students, families, and the community for their comprehensive contributions to advancing strategic plan goals and approved the annual plan to continue to move those goals forward. Click for the [2024-2025 Annual Plan presentation](#).

## First Year of University of Illinois Design Thinking Partnership a Success

New Trier's first year of partnership with the Siebel Center for Design at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign has advanced the district's work in design thinking for faculty and students, Assistant Superintendent Peter Tragos told the Board.

In the 2023-2024 school year, Siebel Center for Design faculty worked with New Trier faculty and administrators to support the development of the school's Innovation Hub as a model of teaching and learning using human centered design principles. Human centered design is a creative problem-solving approach in which people work across disciplines to collaboratively develop solutions for an unmet human need.

The work included professional development for 19 teachers from 13 different departments who participated in professional learning collaboratives co-led by New Trier and Siebel Center faculty. Participants developed methodology and faculty training for human centered design in the classroom, allowing New Trier to advance cross-disciplinary work in the future.

Faculty from the Siebel Center for Design and New Trier said the unique partnership has included new tools to help teachers develop human centered design curricula, development of

collaborative spaces like the Innovation Hub on the Northfield Campus, and rubrics to assess student learning and teacher projects.

In addition, the University of Illinois conducted interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations to help measure the impact of human centered design on teacher development and student learning. They submitted a paper with their observations to the American Educational Research Association for their 2025 Annual Meeting.

Tragos said the continuing partnership with Siebel Center for Design in 2024-2025 will help New Trier scale up the Innovation Hub ideas across the school and further support the development of student career pathways in the 2025-2026 school year. Click for the [Siebel Center partnership presentation](#).

## Other News from the July 15 Meeting

- The Board approved a Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 based on expectations for revenues and expenditures for the year. The Board is required to adopt a budget by the conclusion of the first quarter of the fiscal year, and the District takes a conservative approach to forecasting and planning each year. The \$141M Tentative Budget is balanced and anticipates a surplus of \$4.3M after debt payments on the East Side Academic and Athletic Project bond issue. The Board will hold a public hearing on the Final Budget at its regular meeting on Sept. 16, 2024. Click for the [Tentative Budget memo](#).

*The New Trier Board of Education generally meets on the third Monday of each month, with the business portion of the meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.*

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

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