

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

August 23, 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, August 23, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present

Ms. Cathy Albrecht, President
Ms. Kimberly Alcantara
Mr. Avik Das
Ms. Jean Hahn
Mr. Brad McLane
Ms. Sally Tomlinson

Administrators Present

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

Present via Phone

Dr. Paul Sally, Superintendent
Mr. Keith Dronen, Vice President

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. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Mr. Eric Johnson, Technology Department; Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary; members of the press and community.

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER – 6:00 p.m. – C234

Ms. Albrecht called the Regular Meeting of August 23, 2021 of the Board of Education to order at 6:00 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus.

Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

Ms. Albrecht asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Ms. Alcantara moved that the Board adjourn to closed session for the purpose of the 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 litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes. 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. Alcantara, Ms. Albrecht

NAY: none

The motion passed.

II. CLOSED SESSION – 6:00 p.m. – A303

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

Ms. Albrecht recalled the Regular Meeting of August 23, 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.

IV. Minutes

Ms. Albrecht asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 12, 2021 (open and closed session), the Special Meeting of July 19, 2021 (open and closed session), and the Special Meeting of August 11, 2021 (open session). There was one request by Ms. Hahn for a change to the closed session minutes of July 19th and the open session minutes of August 11th, which were incorporated. Ms. Hahn moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 12, 2021 (open and closed session), the Special Meeting of July 19, 2021 (open and closed session), and the Special Meeting of August 11, 2021 (open session). 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 four requests for public comment. Ms. Albrecht reminded those speaking to keep their comments to three minutes or less per Board Policy 2:230.

1. Mr. Martin Kokoszka, shared about FAIR, the Foundation Against Intolerance and Racism. He went on to share comments about curriculum.
2. Dr. Carrie Mendoza, parent, shared comments about FAIR and equity.
3. Mr. Rusty Magner, parent, shared comments about keeping the school open, five-days-a-week for full in-person learning.
4. Ms. Keely Roberts, Ms. Aidia Steen, Ms. Annabel Miller, Ms. Rachel Ganz and Ms. Luisa Struck, junior and senior students, shared their response to a variety of public comments made at the July 12th Regular Board Meeting. They spoke in support of the district's approach to masks, the teaching of race and racism, and the book *Two Boys Kissing*. Students have signed and affirmed their statement which will be sent to the Board.

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:

- He began by sharing about the first day of school, noting it was wonderful to see students on campus. He also noted that it was nice to have staff back and see their excitement to have students back.
- Adviser rooms held meet and greets before school started. These were hosted by senior helpers and advisers and were well attended.
- There were about 900 students on campus today and the day concluded with an assembly. Mr. Waechtler thanked Mr. Paul Moretta, Athletics Coordinator and Social Studies Department Faculty, for organizing the event as well as Mr. Dan Paustian, Social Work Department Coordinator, who emceed. Mr. Cole Handelman and Ms. Natalie Freres, seniors, talked about their New Trier experience. The New Trier Cheer Team taught freshmen cheers.
- Mr. Waechtler also thanked the New Trier Parents' Association (NTPA) who handed out drawstring bags to freshmen this morning.
- Transfer families attended tours of the Northfield campus hosted by previous transfer students. Mr. Waechtler presented to the parents. This was hosted by the NTPA.

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

- She noted that the first day of school was great and students were excited to be back in the building.
- There was a barbeque for sophomores along with tours of the campus that Student Council led.
- Ms. Struck, who the Board heard from earlier during public comments, is co-president of the Transfer Students group, Newbies. That group took students on tours while Mrs. Dubravec stayed with the parents. The event concluded with a luncheon. Mrs. Dubravec also shared that Ms. Struck and her co-president reach out to students as they move into the District and invite them to get together.

- Adviser home visits are not taking place this year, instead parents are coming to campus. Mrs. Dubravec gave an example of what Ms. Dawn Sullivan, Applied Arts Department Faculty, did to welcome parents to her adviser “home visit.”
- In adviser room today, information was reviewed with students about masks and social distancing.
- There were a couple of athletic competitions going on this evening. Information on intramurals will be sent out shortly.
- Fall auditions begin Thursday, while Lagniappe will perform September 21st – 23rd.
- Band was hosting an ice cream social this evening.
- Post-high school counseling has two events this week on August 25th and 26th.
- The activities fair will take place on September 22nd and 23rd.
- The week of September 27th is Spirit Week with the Homecoming dance taking place on October 2nd. There will be a night rally which is being organized by Mrs. Dubravec, Mr. Augie Fontanetta, Athletic Director, and Ms. Stacy Kolack, Winnetka Student Activities Coordinator. There will also be a parent meet and greet the evening of the football game.
- Mrs. Dubravec explained changes that have taken place with lockers. Advisers will ask if a student would like a locker, if so, they will be given one that will be theirs for the next three years. Most will be on the first floor by the main entrance points.
- Communication will be sent out regarding permission to leave campus. Students in grades eleven and twelve may leave campus, but only during their lunch period. She shared details of this process. If students have either fourth or eighth periods free at the end of the day, they may leave.

Ms. Albrecht noted that the pictures were great to see. She went on to address the students who shared comments earlier noting they were well spoken and did an excellent job.

Mr. Johnson gave the FOIA report, noting that there were four requests since the last Board meeting, all are closed. Requests included information related to copiers and printers, electronic communication sent to the District regarding Covid, aggregate data involving student grades and finally, one for information on an Advanced Placement (AP) course.

B. 2021-2022 School Year Planning Update and Parent Teacher Conference Plan

Dr. Sally presented the 2021-2022 school year planning update and parent teacher conference plan. He began with safety and mitigation, noting the two main goals driving decisions are student and staff safety and sustained in-person learning for every student. Masks are required indoors, but optional outdoors. The District will revisit tightening and loosening mitigations as conditions and guidance change. The District wants as many people vaccinated as possible and continues to monitor recommendations and mandates from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois School Board of Education (ISBE). It would like as many people participating in Covid testing as possible, though at this time, the District is only mandating testing for students participating in extracurricular activities who have not provided proof of vaccination. This will continue to be monitored in order to determine the best approach for the school at any given time. Dr. Sally also noted the importance of social distance awareness, especially during lunch.

The District continues to consult with the Covid Response and Community Wellness Team (CRCWT)/Reopening Advisory Board (RAB) 2.0. The group will think on key questions such as how mitigation efforts should be tightened or relaxed based on conditions that are seen and the guidance the District receives.

Next, Mr. Johnson shared about the University of Illinois/Shield testing, which is the free PCR saliva testing that is being provided at each campus. The sample is provided on campus and helps to reduce the spread of Covid in the school and community. It also reduces the risk of interrupting instruction. All students and staff are encouraged to test. Also, all students participating in overnight travel must test, regardless of vaccination status. All other unvaccinated students are strongly encouraged to participate in testing. Testing is taking place in the Gaffney Auditorium at the Winnetka campus and in the Cornog Auditorium at Northfield. Unvaccinated staff are required to test as well.

Regarding communications, the Board will be updated monthly on the operational plan and any necessary changes. These changes will also be communicated with families. The District has established a new Health and Safety Measures page on its website which will be update regularly. The dashboard will also return that looks at the local and school metrics.

Then, Mr. Tragos presented on the district's approach to maintaining learning during quarantine. Health services will work individually with families regarding quarantine and when to return to school. In collaboration with department leaders and teachers, a plan to help students keep pace with their learning and return to the classroom as seamlessly as possible was created. The foundation of the plan is a high level of communication with the student, adviser, case manager and parents through a variety of channels. Teachers have created robust Canvas courses. A checklist for students and teachers has also been designed that allows for a simple and consistent process. Support for students will also be available during their absence as well as the academic assistance center on either campus once they return.

Mr. Waechtler shared information about parent-teacher conferences. Last year's virtual conferences were popular amongst families and faculty. He went on to share the advantages and disadvantages of virtual conferences and in-person ones. After a survey of the New Trier Parents' Association in the spring and then again during the summer, they thought that the advantages of remote conferences outweighed the disadvantages. There is uncertainty with the pandemic and planning needs to happen now. Research was done and the technology department came up with the solution to use "Meet the Teacher" software. Lake Forest used this software last year and it received very good reviews. Mr. Waechtler noted that this is not a promise to do this every year and this cycle will be evaluated as a decision is made for next year. Dr. Sally then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Hahn shared her thanks, noting it was exciting to see students back. She also shared that the Board heard from the community this evening as well as via email about how happy they are with the plan and the District's commitment to keeping students in-person. Ms. Hahn noted the importance of communication and had a couple of questions regarding that. After further comments, Ms. Hahn noted that an important part of keeping sustained in-person learning going as well as keeping students and staff safe is staying home when one is sick even for an absence that may not turn out to be Covid. She inquired as to what kind of communication parents should have with health services and/or teachers to navigate the return to school for something minor. She inquired if it is thought that health services could handle that kind of level of communication. Her fear is having many different interpretations of when it is ok to return to school and how best to navigate that piece. Mr. Johnson responded that the District encourages everyone to report their absence through the online form and it is routed to those who need to see it. Health services will reach out for follow up and the process for the student returning. Ms. Hahn followed up by noting that last year parents received an exposure notice when a student in their child's class or in an area where they were present were positive. She inquired if the school will be following the same protocol this year. Mr. Johnson replied that, at this time, exposure notifications are still part of the school's protocol.

Ms. Hahn inquired what the plans are for Freshmen-Go-to-School-Night. Mr. Waechtler said plans have not been made yet but hopes that families could be on campus. He would like them to navigate the campus to see what the classrooms are like and to see teachers. As of now, Mr. Waechtler hopes to find a way to make that happen if possible.

Ms. Alcantara followed up on some of Ms. Hahn's comments that were related to the Operational Plan for the year. After additional comments, she noted her appreciation for the reasons behind why the District is doing things the way it is whether it be virtual parent-teacher conferences or home visits. Ms. Alcantara wanted to confirm that in future years, there will be a reassessment of the virtual versus in-person interactions. After further comments, Ms. Alcantara noted that she does not want to gloss over and lose the in-person interactions that have been a very important part of New Trier for many years. Mr. Waechtler responded events such as parent-teacher conferences will be re-evaluated, and feedback gathered from the various stakeholders before a decision is made.

Mr. McLane thanked Mr. Johnson for activating Shield and he looks forward to the ability to ramp up as needed. He also shared his thanks for reconstituting RAB as Covid Reentry and Community Wellness Team as well as additional comments related to this. He was excited to see Dashboard 2.0 up and running. He said he thought that remote parent-teacher conferences worked well last year and was glad the District thought about it and is keeping it going as it fits a lot of other parental schedules regardless of the pandemic. He noted that the block schedule lessens the number of transitions. He inquired of Mrs. Dubravec and Mr. Waechtler how they were going to enforce mask wearing. Mr. Waechtler noted there are a lot of reminders, but shared that students are mostly compliant. The other piece is that teachers build great relationships with their students and students do not want to let them down. In classrooms, Mr. Waechtler noted that compliance will be good, while in the hallways, there may be the need to have administrators and others walk around to remind students. Mrs. Dubravec shared that adviser chairs sent out an email today with the mask information for students and staff. She noted the main issue is non-compliance not defiance. She

shared further comments, agreeing that the hallways are probably the hardest. There is a process for staff to work with students and it is everyone's responsibility to work with them. Ms. Hahn added that at last year's RAB meetings, a part of the agenda included building level reports. After further comments, Ms. Hahn noted that her sense from hearing the building reports last year while non-compliance was an almost constantly needed reminder, there were vanishingly few instances of defiance. While it might be taxing to stay on students about this, what has been described was the case last year and Ms. Hahn envisions this going forward. Mr. Waechtler shared final thoughts while Mr. Johnson shared an anecdote about his time at Winnetka earlier in the day.

Ms. Albrecht wanted to confirm that if a teacher is under quarantine, there is a substitute in their place since there no longer is virtual teaching, which both principals corroborated.

Regarding lunch, she noted that with the nice weather, students can be outside. She inquired how the school sees lunch happening going forward since students no longer have to check into areas for contact tracing as well as in terms of distancing. Mrs. Dubravec responded that part of the information shared today was the need for students to spread out when eating. The "eat up, mask up, clean up" campaign is back. Students were reminded that if they are unvaccinated, they needed to be spaced six feet apart. Mrs. Dubravec noted that some retraining is needed as students went to all the usual spots, so reminding them that they can go to other parts of the building will be helpful. Ms. Albrecht inquired if there would be other areas in the school where students could grab food aside from the cafeteria. Mrs. Dubravec replied that that has not been established yet but could happen if needed. Conversation continued between Ms. Albrecht, Mrs. Dubravec and Mr. Johnson around this topic.

Ms. Albrecht confirmed with Dr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer, that the dashboard just went up, which he confirmed. Ms. Albrecht noted it was great to see and thanked him for that work. Ms. Albrecht also reminded everyone that 92% of New Trier staff and 90% of students have reported receiving the vaccine with a 97% vaccination rate amongst teachers. She went on to share that a lot was learned last year especially with the availability of the dashboard. She noted that there is not a preplanned trigger like last year. The virus changes as do the responses to it. If a situation arises, the Board and administration will talk along with gathering information from the CRCWT. Ms. Albrecht hopes for a successful year, noting it is good to have everyone back in school.

C. 2021-2022 Annual Plan Update

Dr. Sally then presented an update on items in the annual plan for the 2021-2022 school year. They included the block schedule, the adviser program, critical thinking and civil discourse as well as culture, climate, and equity. Mr. Tragos began with the block schedule and highlighted some of the summer professional development opportunities that were available to teachers. Ongoing preparation to teach in full, in-person, 85-minute periods throughout the year will continue, most at the course committee level. Mr. Tragos will provide a progress report to the Board in September.

Mrs. Dubravec shared about the adviser program and the structure of it. There has been good progress over the summer regarding curriculum mapping and aligning items within the program. There was a focus on the areas of adolescent development such as cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and moral. This would start with students, then look at the adviser and the adviser program along with the current initiatives the school is engaged in such as equity, restorative practices, and social emotional learning. All of this would be matched with the motto along with working with *The Characteristics of a New Trier Graduate*. The goal is to have everything in alignment with these key areas. Mrs. Dubravec went on to share about social and emotional health which would focus on brave spaces instead of safe spaces. This would encourage communication of students in the Adviser Room and feeling like they can participate with their authentic self.

Next, Mr. Waechtler went on to share about restorative practices. It is a systemic approach and a variety of staff have gone through training. It is a multi-year approach and is beneficial to not only the student, but the entire community. This work will be translated into New Trier, so that it makes sense for the school.

For two of the extended adviser room periods, discussion will focus on mental health during one and equity for the other. These are two important pieces from the Strategic Plan and training will take place with advisers. Next, Mr. Waechtler noted that the single-gender structure was being reviewed as to if it is the best plan going forward. An initial presentation is planned for the November Board Meeting.

Mr. Tragos then updated the Board on Critical Thinking and Civil Discourse. This will provide transparency to the community and Board about what teaching, and learning looks like at New Trier along with what it looks like to

create a culture of inquiry across the school and each one of the content areas. In working with department leaders and teachers, they will share the how and why of what they teach. All of this is to engage students in critical thinking. In addition is how, in classrooms, teachers are creating open, civic minded classrooms, where civil engagement and discourse are the norm. This also includes engaging students in the thinking and debates of the discipline. A series of four to five presentations will be brought to the Board this year showing how faculty teach critical thinking skills in students within each discipline. Social Studies will give the first report in September.

Dr. Sally shared about culture, climate, and equity noting it is an important framework area in the Strategic Plan. There are two main goals in this area, the first is that every student should feel like they belong at New Trier and the second is that every student should be ready to listen to and understand perspectives different from their own when they graduate. Dr. Sally shared that the team has been talking with Dr. Floyd Cobb and Dr. John Krownapple. Their text and approach to work with schools is captured in the title of their book, *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity*. In talking with them and reading their book, Dr. Sally shared that they have the closest match to the two goals mentioned. Dr. Sally would like Dr. Cobb to present to the Board on September 8th, which is the same day as the closed session workshop with the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB). Dr. Cobb would present in open session about the approach to meet these two main goals. Dr. Sally then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. McLane inquired if copies of the book, *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity*, would be shared ahead of the meeting, to which Dr. Sally stated that Board members would receive a copy in the next few days.

Ms. Tomlinson shared comments on the adviser program, noting her excitement for restorative practices. She noted the importance of communicating and educating students about the process and making sure they hear about issues being resolved. Ms. Tomlinson noted that a team would be developed to create consistency in handling different situations and inquired if that would be an administrative team. After clarification, Mrs. Dubravec shared that Ms. Cindy Fialka, Adviser Program Strategic Initiatives and Alignment Coordinator and Math Department Faculty, is working closely with herself, Adviser Chairs, advisers, Mr. Scott Williams, Assistant Principal for Student Services, and Mr. Waechtler. Ms. Tomlinson confirmed that it will be an adult team. She went on to commend the “brave” spaces versus “safe” spaces concept. Ms. Tomlinson inquired if the surveys regarding the adviser program were for student and if so, which ones. She went on to share her concern that many students, depending on grade, did not have a typical adviser experience. Mr. Waechtler responded that the survey took place last year, with Ms. Tomlinson then noting that there was a bigger population who had experience with the adviser system.

Ms. Tomlinson asked if the presentations related to Critical Thinking and Civil Discourse could be recorded and made available to parents. Regarding equity, she loved hearing about the monthly programming that will be done by students and is excited to hear more about that piece. She shared her appreciation for all the work that has been done.

Ms. Alcantara inquired if the professional development that was offered over the summer was in-person with remote capability. Mr. Tragos responded that some professional development was in-person, some remote, and some hybrid.

Ms. Alcantara inquired if everything has been compiled for the surveys or if new ones were going to be sent, to which Mrs. Dubravec responded that feedback has already been collected. Ms. Alcantara followed up asking about the response rates. Mrs. Dubravec replied that responses were split in terms of students wanting single-gender or mixed-gender adviser rooms. Ms. Alcantara clarified that she meant the total percentage of participation in the surveys. Conversation continued between Ms. Alcantara and Mrs. Dubravec around this topic.

Lastly, Ms. Alcantara commented on the timeline of the Board presentations, noting it is both exciting and ambitious. Looking at the number and substance of topics to be researched and presented and the energy and time it will take administratively and at meetings, her hope is that there is a pacing that is being considered. Dr. Sally replied that there is a lot the District is trying to do and that many of the topics tie together. He also noted that he, Ms. Albrecht, and Mr. Dronen will review the agendas to make sure a particular meeting will not be overwhelmed. Dr. Sally said that changes to the timeline would be taken under advisement. Most of the groups are excited to present and share with the community, but Dr. Sally ensured that it will be in manageable chunks.

Mr. Dronen commented that an equity audit was planned and now the approach will be to bring in Dr. Cobb and Dr. Krownapple. He asked for further details as to why the District is no longer doing the equity audit. Dr. Sally replied that in talking to them about the District’s goals, it is the active involvement of people both inside and outside the school through this process that is going to drive change. Dr. Sally went on to share further comments, noting that

this process is to make action part of the research process of the District's policies, personnel, and practices in order to help it to achieve its two main goals. Dr. Sally noted that the District will move through it in smaller pieces and in some respects, it is similar to the District's approach with the Strategic Plan with the Annual Planning goals. The first work with the team will be to ensure the District has the right goals in front of it and it can start acting and making changes as soon as possible.

Mr. Dronen followed up on Ms. Alcantara's inquiry about if students had been surveyed regarding adviser room, he asked if there would be an option for either single-gender or mixed or if it would be one or the other. Dr. Sally responded that there has been no determination made yet and went on to share further comments.

Ms. Hahn noted her appreciation for the work and shared that what strikes her in looking at the overview for the year is the amount of work that goes into every aspect internally at New Trier. She noted that one hears a lot in the popular press, and the Board heard a bit of it this evening, regarding out-of-the-box curriculum that different districts purchase or use. She has always been impressed, and her understanding has been, that this is not done at New Trier. Like many things that are unique to New Trier, the District prides itself on creating most content and processes internally through a process of department leaders, committee work along with input from the community and students. Ms. Hahn went on to state that is why she believes New Trier has the exceptional educational experience that students enjoy because the school does the work. It can be based on research that outsiders do and based on best practices, but the school does not take something out of a box and plug-it into New Trier. She commended the District for that and notes it is the students who benefit and thought it important that the community understand this. Mr. Tragos and Dr. Sally noted she was correct and thanked her for her comments.

Regarding the block schedule, Ms. Hahn inquired if there will be student feedback along the way regarding their experience with it. Mr. Tragos shared that the school is committed to doing a review of the block schedule throughout the year including asking students what their learning experience is like. Dr. Sally noted that the Board will hear more about this in November or December along with the direction proposed for the future.

Ms. Hahn noted that pre-pandemic, Board members were able to spend time observing classes, but shared it would be a great opportunity with the block schedule to experience what an 85-minute period feels like as well as the content of a classroom.

Ms. Albrecht inquired if there is a schedule built out for the year for continuing professional development. Mr. Tragos noted that in working with department leaders, now is the time to turn this over to departments and course committees. Course committees will do their own internal professional development within their content areas. Any other formal presentations or school-wide workshops will emerge, and work is still taking place with Dr. Chimille Tillery, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, regarding the professional development catalog. Ms. Albrecht shared that in the past it was noted that there should be less student stress with the block schedule. She noted that there were anecdotes last year with the modified block schedule that the homework level was still high. Ms. Albrecht anticipates that homework will continue to be an important issue this year. As students return from a difficult year, it is even more important to Ms. Albrecht that students are not overloaded as they adjust to being back in school and to the block schedule. Mr. Tragos agreed, noting there is also school-wide agreement about ramping students back up to learning. He noted that the block schedule will offer a return to a better normal pacing of this, but it will take some calibration for students and teachers. Ms. Albrecht responded to Mr. Tragos comments. Dr. Sally shared that it is a full plate for teachers, and they are embracing the challenges of bringing students back, assessing where they are, making sure that they do all they can to support this transition. Teachers did a wonderful job this summer with this work and are ready to take this on. Ms. Albrecht shared final thoughts, encouraging patience on all sides as everyone adjusts.

D. Facilities Update: Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project Update and 15-Year Plan Year 2 Summer 2021 Projects

Mr. Johnson presented an update on the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project and the 15-Year Plan Year 2 Summer 2021 Projects. He provided a summary of how this plan came to be. The purpose of the work was the phased renovation of the North and Tower buildings at Winnetka on the third floor and included classroom improvements. At the Northfield campus, improvements included modernizing classrooms in the D building as well as maintaining roofs, mechanical systems, and other security improvements. He provided a summary of the renovations on the third floor of the Winnetka campus that have occurred since 2017. Mr. Johnson shared pictures of the new hallways of the North and Tower buildings which looks as if one is in the new building of the west side part of the campus. He also included pictures of updated classrooms in the North and Tower buildings. He shared

comments about technology and went on to share about the math department's office. Pictures from work at Northfield were also displayed. Finally, Mr. Johnson shared the year two schedule with the work approved in the Fall of 2019 and completed in August of 2021.

Next, Mr. Johnson provided a brief update on the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project, noting that design work is underway. Much of this work is being done behind the scenes to coordinate mechanical systems to reduce change orders later. Other work is being done to make sure the District is maintaining the project budget and understanding the market constraints with commodities such as steel to create alternates so it can continue to control the price. Site utility is also being completed along Trevian Way that are easier to do now before students arrive and winter begins so the District is prepared for the official start of the project in late December. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. McLane inquired if Trevian Way and Essex will be unimpeded for the most part, especially for morning drop-off, while construction occurs. Mr. Johnson replied that it will, noting that the District is careful to set what the drop-off and delivery hours are, with workers arriving prior to the student drop-off time. The District also has no delivery hours where trucks are not allowed to visit campus to deliver items. Mr. Johnson noted that due to construction happening so close to Essex Road, there may be limited road closures for periods of time, but the District will make sure that it does not interfere as much as possible.

Ms. Albrecht noted that the third floor looks amazing and inquired about the students' reactions. Mr. Johnson shared comments and thanked Ms. Dizon, Director of Communications, and Ms. Lia Kass, Communications Specialist, for pictures from the first day of school.

Mr. Johnson went on to compliment the Physical Plant Services (PPS) team who managed the construction project over the summer along with Mr. Steve Cashman and Pepper Construction. They were working ten hours a day, six days-a-week to make sure the school was ready for students and teachers. The technology department also did a great job.

Ms. Hahn inquired as to why the third floor was selected first, which Mr. Johnson explained. Timelines will be reviewed this fall with the Facilities Steering Committee and Finance Committee regarding moving to work on other floors.

***E. 15-Year Plan Year 3 (Summer 2022) Project Approval**

Before Mr. Johnson presented on the 15-Year Plan Year 3 (Summer 2022) Project Approval, he reminded everyone that the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project begins in January 2022 and continues until the Fall of 2023. The District wanted to concentrate its management and financial resources on that project, so it is completed successfully. At the same time, the District needs to complete critical maintenance, so the buildings continue to run efficiently. Mr. Johnson provided a slimmed down set of priorities for the summer of 2022 that have been reviewed with the Facilities Steering Committee and the Finance Committee.

Mr. Johnson noted that the purpose of the work is to replace aging roofs, upgrade lighting for energy efficiency, basketball backstops, campus tuckpointing, spalled concrete, plaza deck and curtain wall repairs. He noted that the projects lean towards mechanical and security. The costs of the work will be about \$3 million total, with \$2.5 million coming from the fund balance previously transferred to the Capital Projects Fund with the balance coming from the Health Life Safety proceeds. These are funds that the District can issue through debt and there is surplus from previous projects. It is consistent with the long-term plan that has been reviewed by the Finance Committee. Mr. Johnson then shared the schedule highlights for the planned work. Mr. Johnson invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. McLane moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the 15-Year Plan Year 3 (Summer 2022) projects, as presented. 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.

VII. Administrative Items

A. Treasurer's Report for July 2021

Mr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for July 2021. This is the first month of fiscal year 2022 and typically there are lower expenses over the summer. It is atypical on the revenue side, with receipts under \$2 million due to the delay in property taxes. Property tax bills have now been issued and are due October 1st. The issue has been resolved regarding who was receiving the senior tax credit. The District is well positioned from a cash standpoint to handle this delay and is fortunate to have the resources the community provides it. Since it is not a great time to invest, much of the District's money is liquid allowing it to continue to pay its bills until the property tax revenue comes in. The weighted portfolio yield on the investment side continues to decline for both short- and long-term investments.

B. Financial Reports for July 2021

Mr. Johnson presented the Financial Reports for July 2021. As was the case with the June reports, the financials should be considered preliminary as both revenues and expenses will change as the District makes year-end adjustments such as accruing expenses, recording receivables, and deferring revenue. The audit process is on-going. Operating revenue was \$1,437,979 for the first month of the fiscal year, or 92% lower compared to last year when there was a significant property tax distribution. Property taxes were not distributed in July this year, while the District received over \$18 million in property taxes the prior July. The tentative budget for operating revenue is 3.26% higher than the previous fiscal year. Any funds attributable to last year that are received by August 31, 2021 will be recognized in that year. Operating expenditures were \$4.1 million through July, or 9.69% higher than last year. Year to year variances for the first month of the fiscal year do not provide meaningful data as the timing of purchases, supplies and materials can skew those variances significantly in the first month. The tentative budget for operating expenditures is slightly higher than last year. Mr. Johnson then invited questions and comments from the Board on both reports.

Ms. Albrecht noted that there were CDs that came due in August with others due in late November. She inquired if the District would leave those in cash. Mr. Johnson replied that it will reinvest so it still has a three-year ladder. The two discussed this further.

C. Board Policy Revisions – PRESS Issue 107 – First Reading

Dr. Sally presented the first reading of the Board Policy Revisions – PRESS issue 107. He noted it is the first time that the District has had the opportunity to update its policies using the PRESS service. There were eleven policies for Board review. Many of the changes that were made were legal references as well as small wording changes. There were not many substantive items in this update. Dr. Sally thanked Ms. Alcantara and Ms. Hahn, as well as the other members of the Board Policy Committee for ensuring that these policies make sense for New Trier. He then invited Ms. Alcantara and Ms. Hahn to share comments, to which Ms. Hahn noted that Dr. Sally covered it. Ms. Albrecht noted that this was new language recommended by the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), to which Ms. Hahn confirmed. Discussion continued between the two on the changes. Ms. Hahn went on to share that the committee realized the value and benefit of subscribing to the service that it had hoped for. She noted there was not much of substance to discuss, only minor wordsmithing. Ms. Albrecht noted that these revised policies would return to the Board next month. Dr. Sally followed up with the process for Board policies, noting that they are usually approved on the Consent Agenda in the second reading.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- Bill List for the Period, July 1 – 31, 2021
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Change of Status, Leave of Absence, Resignations, Stipends – Appointment, and Stipends – Separation)
- Network Security Managed Services Contract – Crowd Strike

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, July 1 – 31, 2021; Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Leave of Absence, Resignations, Stipends – Appointments, and Stipends – Separation); and the agreement with CDWG for CrowdStrike Falcon Complete services and authorize the Associate Superintendent to execute the agreement. Ms. Alcantara seconded the motion. 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.

IX. Board Member Reports

Ms. Hahn noted that the Board had heard about the **Policy Committee**.

She thanked the **New Trier Educational Foundation** for sponsoring Second City who presented as the keynote speaker for the Opening Day Institute. She also thanked the administration for including the Board in that day. After sharing other comments, Ms. Hahn noted that Second City was amazing in their message of the power of community as the District approaches this next year to help each other reconnect, reclaim, and reinvent school. She also spoke to comments Ms. Geary shared on Opening Day. The Strokes of Genius Golf Outing which will be held on September 13th and is open to the entire New Trier community. The Foundation is trying to grow the event so that it is more inclusive. She encouraged everyone to participate either by golfing or attending the dinner and presentation.

Ms. Alcantara shared that the **New Trier Parents' Association (NTPA)** circulated their calendar of meetings for the year. The first meeting is scheduled for September 2nd.

Mr. McLane noted that the **Facilities Steering Committee** recently met. He spoke to the light study that was being conducted for the east side project at the Winnetka campus. He noted that it has been an expressed concern by the Board and the community. He shared that the District's team is handling it very well. Mr. Johnson shared an anecdote about the light study. Mr. McLane also noted that the committee touched on the Infrastructure Bills that are going through Congress that will trickle down to the District.

Mr. Das noted that there is a Board packet calendar for September 2021. As the Board liaison to the Booster Club, he noted that their meeting is on September 21st at 7:00 p.m., but that it was not included in the packet calendar. Ms. Ruston noted that she would update the calendar with that meeting.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following:

- The first few weeks of school will be exciting and there are several athletic events occurring as well.
- September 8th, which will be added to the calendar, is the Board's IASB Workshop and the presentation from Dr. Cobb.
- September 13th is NTEF's Strokes of Genius event, and he directed people to their website to sign up.
- Lagniappe-Potpourri starts after the September 20th Regular Board Meeting.

Ms. Alcantara asked for clarification on the timing of the IASB session on September 8th now that the presentation with Dr. Cobb has been added. Dr. Sally replied that the start time is 4:00 p.m., though it might start a little later, but wanted to keep the start time as is for now and it will not go later than 8:00 p.m.

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

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hahn 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 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

Cathleen Albrecht, President