

**NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
September 16, 2024  
New Trier Township High School  
7 Happ Road, Room C234  
Northfield, IL 60093**

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<https://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/boardofeducation>. Please refer to these webpages if you would like more information on an item.*

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, September 16, 2024, at 6:30 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. Christopher Johnson, Associate Superintendent  
Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Asst. Supt. for Special Ed and Student Services  
Mr. Peter Tragos, Asst. Supt. for Curriculum & Instruction  
Mrs. Denise Dubravec, Principal – Winnetka Campus/Assistant Supt.  
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

**Also Present**

Dr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer; Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources; Mr. Myron Spiwak, Director of Business Services; Ms. Molly Lombardi, Social Studies Department Faculty and Teachers’ Association President; Ms. Jill Cervantes, Post High School Counseling Department Chair; Mr. Dan Weidner, Associate Principal for Academics and Administrative Services; Mr. Gary Schubert, Modern and Classical Languages Department Faculty; Mr. Rob Forrest, Social Studies Department Faculty; Mr. James Wright, Social Studies Department Faculty; Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Mr. Jeff Bailey, 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 – 5:30 p.m. – C234**

Ms. Hahn called the Regular Meeting of September 16, 2024, of the Board of Education to order at 5:31 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Roll call was taken, and all members were present, except for Ms. Tomlinson. Ms. Hahn asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Mr. Dronen moved that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session for the purpose of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors, or specific volunteers of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor, or a volunteer of the District or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity; security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property; the placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students; 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. Mr. Das seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

A YE: Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen, Ms. McDonough, Ms. Pofcher, Ms. Alcantara, Ms. Hahn

NAY: none

ABSENT: Ms. Tomlinson

The motion passed.

**II. CLOSED SESSION – 5:30 p.m. – A201A**

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

Ms. Hahn called the Regular Meeting of September 16, 2024, of the Board of Education to order at 6:35 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

### **IV. Minutes and Reports**

#### **\*A. Regular Meeting of August 19, 2024 (open and closed session)**

Ms. Hahn asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 19, 2024 (open and closed 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 August 19, 2024 (open and closed session). Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY:

ABSTAIN: Mr. Dronen

The motion passed.

#### **B. 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:

- The first day of student attendance occurred since the last Board meeting. He thanked the New Trier Parents Association (NTPA) for handing out t-shirts and decorating the campus. Pep band also played as students entered for their first day.
- Freshmen attended the Extracurricular Assemblies with their adviser room over two days. Dr. Tim Hayes, Student Activities Coordinator, shared about club opportunities while Ms. Anne James-Noonan, Music and Theatre Department Faculty, discussed possibilities in performing arts.
- The Student Activities Fair took place last Friday where freshmen could learn more about the various clubs offered. Mr. Waechtler thanked the sponsors and students who participated.
- Freshman Parent Adviser Nights took place on August 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> and were hosted by Ms. Gail Gamrath, Associate Principal – Northfield Campus, Mr. Scott Williams, Assistant Principal for the Class of 2028, and Ms. Sue Ellen Haak and Mr. Mark Howard, Adviser Chairs. Parents then went to their child’s adviser room to meet the adviser and senior helper as well as learn about New Trier.
- Last Thursday, the campus hosted a movie night in the courtyard where students watched “Knives Out.” Mr. Waechtler thanked Dr. Hayes, Girls Club, Triship and parent volunteers for a nice evening.
- This week was Homecoming Week and Pep Club sponsors organized adviser rooms who decorated different parts of the campus. There were also different themes for dressing up each day. Students were encouraged to attend the soccer and football games on Friday.

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

- Classes were welcomed back which included an assembly for the class of 2027.
- Parents of the class of 2027 attended the sophomore family night. They heard from various members of the graduating class team as well as the NTPA. From there, parents went to their child’s adviser room.
- The ABC7 flyover took place on September 13<sup>th</sup> and was a huge success. Several different aspects of the school were highlighted such as Music and Theatre, Applied Arts, Science Olympiad as well as Athletics. Mrs. Dubravec thanked all those staff who helped to make the flyover possible.
- Fall alumni tours have started again with the Class of 1994.
- A Club Fair took place for students at Winnetka.
- New Trier has 34 National Merit Semifinalists with finalists determined in the spring.
- Mrs. Dubravec shared several upcoming events.

Mrs. Dubravec introduced Mr. Dan Weidner, Associate Principal for Academics and Administrative Services, who in turn introduced this year’s foreign exchange students. He provided background on how students are selected for this program. They include Francisca Costa from Portugal, Martin Garces Godoy from Chile, Sara del Arco del Soto from Spain, Grace Lavalley from Sierra Leone, and Louise Bosquax from France. Each student provided information on where they are from, who their host families are, what extracurriculars they have joined so far, and what they are looking forward to at New Trier. Mr. Weidner shared his appreciation for the host families and thanked the Board for

their support of the program. Ms. Hahn welcomed the students to New Trier and thanked the host families. She shared that the Board looks forward to hearing about their experiences in the spring.

Dr. Johnson gave the FOIA report, noting that there have been seven requests since the last Board meeting, six of which have been closed. They included a list of new staff, construction contracts, professional services contracts, student activities, school calendars, and documents related to litigation. Another request similar to the documents related to litigation remains open.

## **V. 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 Dr. Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. Ms. Hahn stated that due to the number of issues which must be considered at the Board Meeting, commenters should limit their statement to three minutes per Board Policy 2-230. Likewise, if a comment requires a response, either Ms. Hahn or an administrator will contact the commenter in the days following the meeting. Questions and comments should address the Board of Education as a whole only. No comments should be directed to an individual Board member, audience, principals, or other staff members. No complaints against individual employees are allowed during a Board of Education Meeting. She also asked that the audience refrain from clapping or a response of any kind regarding people's comments. There was one request for public comment.

1. Mr. Kamran Hussain, parent, had concerns last year as an incoming parent. Over the summer Mr. Waechtler reached out to him as well as other parents and met with them. Mr. Waechtler continues to be in constant communication with them. He wanted to share his appreciation with the Board about all that Mr. Waechtler has done to make him and his student feel welcome at New Trier.

## **VI. Special Orders of Business**

### **A. Superintendent Search: Leadership Profile Report**

Ms. Hahn introduced the superintendent search consultants from Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates (HYA), Dr. Connie Collins, Dr. Brian Harris, and Dr. Max McGee, who presented the leadership profile. Dr. Harris made introductory remarks, sharing it was a delight to meet with all stakeholders.

Dr. Collins reviewed the timeline noting tasks that have already been accomplished, ones that they are currently working on, and ones that will be completed in the future. She then shared details on the quantitative and qualitative data collected, noting 999 people completed the survey while 166 people participated in 21 focus groups, five open forums, and nine individual interviews. She went on to share the five big takeaways. Dr. Collins shared the top ten strengths of the District heard during the focus groups, forums, and interviews, while Dr. Harris shared the top ten challenges. He went on to note the top five immediate priorities for the next superintendent as well as the top ten qualifications or attributes for the next superintendent, highlighting three of them. Ms. Pofcher inquired if they were in rank order, to which Dr. Harris replied they were not, but he highlighted the summary ones of excellent communication skills, empathy and emotional intelligence, and commitment to culture, climate, equity, and belonging.

Dr. McGee shared details about the survey such as the percentage of respondents who rated a series of questions regarding the relative importance of the superintendent's professional qualifications and experience. Respondents said this was extremely important. All this data will help HYA identify candidates with recent, relevant, and similar experiences as well as assist in creating significant probing interview questions. Dr. McGee then went on to share the top five priorities for the new superintendent to address in the next two to three years. One aspect that surprised Dr. McGee was that mental health was lower in the survey than what was heard in the focus groups. He shared that primarily from reading the comments, and there will be more details in the narrative report, that the school is doing a really good job handling student and staff mental health issues. While still a concern, there are a lot of supports. He noted that in the report, more would be shared about the 147 "other" comments, which were equally divided among three themes. Dr. McGee displayed a graphic of the rankings of the top five priorities by stakeholder. Mr. Das asked for clarification on this graphic to which Dr. McGee replied. Next, Dr. McGee shared the top ten personal attributes that respondents believed are essential traits for the next superintendent to have; he also shared the one offs. Lastly, he provided a summary of key qualifications and attributes, highlighting four of them. Dr. Harris shared next steps, including important dates and then invited comments and questions from the Board.

Ms. McDonough inquired if there was anything surprising or unexpected in the results. Dr. Harris noted that with the focus groups, how to manage high expectations, while obvious, was consistent in every group. Ms. McDonough then

inquired if there was anything stakeholders may have missed that has come up in other searches. Dr. McGee answered that very little was heard about the Strategic Plan. While the consultants heard about mental health in the focus groups, survey and the survey comments, they did not hear about it overwhelmingly. Dr. Harris added that it does not mean that it is not being dealt with, but more about continuing to do this work and paying attention to it.

Dr. Collins then thanked Ms. Ruston, Board Secretary, for her work in organizing and scheduling the interviews, focus groups, and forums, the communications department, as well as the survey respondents and participants.

Ms. Hahn also thanked those who participated and shared comments on behalf of the Board.

## **B. Safety and Security Update**

Dr. Sally began the update on safety and security, noting that the topics will include an overview of the District's approach, the Safety Committee, safety training for staff and students, and technology updates. This month's presentation is an overview of our procedures to address concerns that arose after the recent hold event that occurred on 9/5. A more comprehensive update will be presented in December.

Dr. Sally began the presentation by sharing the four layers of our approach to safety and security. Mrs. Dubravec then shared that the Safety Committee was resurrected last year and is made up of a variety of stakeholders such as the Board, administration, director of security, technology team, faculty, support staff, security team, students and parents. Mr. Marty Laffey, Math Department Faculty, is co-chair. The committee will meet in October and review several updated procedures that are part of an emergency operations plan; they will look at the review of the school's fire drill; as well as plans for a lockdown. The committee provides valuable feedback and will meet several times throughout the year. Next, Mrs. Dubravec shared about safety training for students and staff.

Mrs. Dubravec shared about the "I Love U Guys" foundation and a training that she and others attended. The foundation created universal language that can be used in all schools. The District has adopted their icons and their verbiage, which is known as the Standard Response Protocol and tells people what to do in certain situations. Dr. Sally went through each icon and the situation it represents along with any action that may be needed. Next, Dr. Sally shared details about internal and external communication protocols.

Mrs. Dubravec provided an update on technology in regards to safety, particularly regarding the Raptor Alert App which provides the school with the ability to account for all students, staff, substitutes, and visitors during an emergency. The app also allows for the ability to call an emergency, include messaging, as well as reunification. There will be more information about reunification shared at the December Board meeting. Dr. Sally then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Tomlinson inquired that when students swipe in to enter the building if Raptor captures that information, to which Mrs. Dubravec replied that it is a different system that does so. The integration of these two systems is something that the District is working on. Ms. Tomlinson then inquired if the school is doing anything to communicate with students to provide them with information whether something has taken place at New Trier or at one of the sender schools. She followed up that the District is looking at its phone policies and inquired how this might work in the future. Dr. Sally replied that there are staff, security, and faculty who are in lots of places in the building. So even if a student is not in a space that is directly supervised there is an adult nearby who understands what is happening. In terms of notifying students about something that might be happening at a sender school, the District does not have the ability to alert a specific set of students. He noted there are a lot of issues to discuss around how to help students manage what might be happening elsewhere. Mrs. Dubravec added that the school is going to institute a "return to adviser room" if needed after an incident occurs.

Mr. Das commended the significant amount of thought that is apparent as the District works through this. He is getting acclimated to the language, particularly the signage. He noted having difficulty correlating the language to the icons and inquired if those are Raptor icons. Mrs. Dubravec replied that the icons are from the "I Love U Guys" foundation and that Raptor adopted them for their use. Mr. Das inquired if the icons are a hierarchy of the level of security. Dr. Sally and Mrs. Dubravec replied that they can vary depending on the situation. While some of the icons make sense to him, there are others that do not. Mrs. Dubravec shared that for lockdown, given the way students have free periods at the Winnetka campus, the "Run, Hide, Fight" protocol has been added. This protocol is used at most colleges and universities, and has been taught at New Trier, so it was included given the campus' unique circumstances. Mr. Das also shared that lockdown is the highest level of action, but that is not apparent on the sign. Ms. McDonough clarified that only staff have the Raptor app, not students, which Mrs. Dubravec confirmed. Ms.

McDonough added that the notification from Raptor will make noise even if someone's phone is on silent.

Ms. Alcantara commented that there might be some confusion about what the "hold" category might entail. She thought it might be helpful to provide some examples such as someone is having a seizure or an anaphylactic reaction. Dr. Sally replied and discussion ensued between the two.

Ms. Hahn commented that given what was heard from HYA about how top of mind security is, it might be worthwhile to have a safety night where parents could come and ask questions. Mrs. Dubravec replied that an event is in the works. Ms. Hahn then inquired if the sender schools are using the same language from the "I Love U Guys" foundation. Dr. Sally replied that some are using it while others are not, among other comments. Ms. Hahn asked, as part of the December conversation, to hear about how the school is communicating the intended use of TrevTips as a safety item and less about exposing misconduct.

### **C. Profile of the Class of 2024**

Dr. Tragos presented the profile of the class of 2024. This 15<sup>th</sup> annual report is used to inform the Board, parents, and community about the course taking patterns and level profiles of students in the most recent graduating class. Dr. Tragos noted that Ms. Jill Cervantes, Post High School Counseling Department Chair, was in attendance and shared his appreciation for her collaboration and insights on the college process. Dr. Tragos shared the purpose of the profile. The data set in the report's tables include 866 "4-year" graduates or those who completed eight semesters at New Trier; the class itself had 940 students. These students began their high school career in August 2020, in remote learning. He provided other background details on the class. Dr. Tragos shared information on the student level profiles in core courses both single level profiles as well as mixed levels. He noted that the big headlines are that more students are taking a program with mixed levels, more students are taking a program with at least one four-level class, and more students are taking at least one Advanced Placement (AP) class. He then walked through the data that supported these three highlights. Dr. Tragos then went on to share how one might think and talk about this information by explaining how the numbers changed, why they did, and what it means.

Moving to core academics, Dr. Tragos explained that it is recommended that students should take between four and five core academic classes per year or 16-20 throughout their high school career. He went on to discuss the percentages of students who took between 19-20 core courses over their four years (42.7%), down three percent from 2023, while 31.5% took fewer than 19 core courses, which is similar to the classes of 2017-2021. The percentage of students who took more than 20 core courses was 25.9%, which has gone up, but is consistent with previous classes. Regarding electives, 64.3% of students took between two and four electives over the course of their four years. The percentage of students taking between 4.5-8 electives is 27.3%.

Dr. Tragos then shared an item new to the report that while not fully formed is interesting and information that the school wants to know more about. He categorized it as future programming and clusters of courses. This included broad categories of STEM and Creative Arts and came from him wanting a better perspective on student interest and their course patterns. Dr. Tragos went on to orient everyone to the table. He noted that there is a graduation requirement of 1.0 credit (two semesters) of fine and/or practical arts. There were 313 students who took at least one non-core STEM course and for Creative Arts, 677 students took at least one of those courses. Therefore, there are a subset of students who are expressing an interest beyond the minimum requirement that Dr. Tragos would like to know more about. Out of the 313 students, there were about 90 of them who took two-and-a-half or more classes, which is a significant number of students who have expressed a real interest in some sort of STEM field outside of math and science classes.

Next, Dr. Tragos shared statistics from the class, noting that on average 8.72 applications per student were submitted. The number of students who submitted at least one test-optional application was 360. There was a nine percent decrease from last year regarding the total applications that were test-optional, coming in at 28%. The same percentage of students applied Early Decision as the class of 2023 at 32%. He then shared several trends such as an end to test-optional policies at several prominent schools as well as non-academic influence on admissions like "positive character attributes."

Finally, Dr. Tragos shared about the five college matriculation tables in the report, noting they translate the data – level profile, number of core academics, and number of electives. Matriculation does not mean acceptance, rather it is where students actually decided to attend. The charts represent 48 colleges and universities where at least five students attend. The table at the end of the report lists the 223 colleges and universities where at least one New Trier student matriculated. While the tables are informative by giving one a sense of where students went and the

experiences they had, a college application is multi-dimensional with many factors playing into it. Dr. Tragos then invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Tomlinson acknowledged the timing of the report as a couple of years ago, parent feedback was received that they hoped to get the college matriculation data earlier so they could guide their seniors through post-high school planning. She appreciated the effort of shifting gears to get this out sooner. She then went on to share her appreciation for the data as it helps her to understand how effective some program decisions have been, which she provided an example of. The report also suggests to her what future programming might look like, which she further commented on. She thanked Dr. Tragos for sharing the data.

Ms. McDonough shared that the data from HYA was a sobering reminder of how focused students are on maximizing college admissions. She applauds the message that post-high school counselors are sending to students that college is a match to be made, not a prize to be won. She then inquired if schools have a good enough understanding of New Trier's philosophy on AP courses. Ms. Cervantes replied that around 200 schools will visit New Trier this fall and during their visit, they will meet with a member of the department in order to learn more about the programs and services the District offers. She went on to share Mr. Tom Shorrock's idea who has enlisted the help of Ms. Heather Ecklund to start an inaugural higher education admissions advisory board. Admissions directors from some of New Trier's feeder schools would be invited to spend the day with the Board, students, and staff to learn more about the District as well as offer their feedback on certain programming. Regarding APs, Ms. Cervantes shared that part of their letter of recommendation clearly describes New Trier's academic program and policies around this.

Ms. McDonough inquired if there were any broader trends that Ms. Cervantes was observing. She replied that students seem to be trending towards applying to schools in a warmer climate. They also continue to like the Rocky Mountains as applications have increased to Boulder. Ms. Cervantes shared additional comments. Dr. Tragos then noted further data and details pertaining to the trend of an increase in attendance at school in a warmer climate. He also discussed the return to test scores trend. Ms. McDonough inquired how the trend of a student's positive attributes is being communicated with colleges, to which Ms. Cervantes replied.

Ms. Alcantara noted that with the smaller, private colleges, there are concerns about failing financial health by either closing or cutting programs. She inquired if Ms. Cervantes had seen any of that impact on students. Ms. Cervantes replied that the department keeps an eye on it, but it does not seem to impact New Trier students as those are not the schools that students are looking at.

Ms. Hahn inquired about the new cluster data that Dr. Tragos spoke about and inquired if the future programming group will use this data in practicality to determine what courses and pathways might look like. Dr. Tragos replied that the data will be used by this group as well as by Hanover Research.

Ms. Hahn shared that this data goes a long way in reassuring families that their students will go to wonderful institutions. She went on to share it broadens the lens that not only will they get in and attend college, but they will succeed. She inquired how many New Trier graduates go on to earn a four-year degree including those who start at a junior college and go on to complete a four-year degree. Dr. Tragos replied that the six-year Bachelor's completion rate is about 82-84%. Dr. Sally added that it gets reported on the School Report Card, but that number is incomplete based on how the state collects the data. The school relies on the post-high school counseling department to help with this data. He noted that this is an important area that still needs work to develop the data systems to track this type of information of what students did during college and even after. He went on to share concluding comments about this.

#### **D. Policy Revisions - First Reading - PRESS 115 & 116**

Dr. Sally presented the first reading of the policy revisions for PRESS issues 115 and 116. The policy committee reviewed changes which were provided to the Board. He thanked the committee for their work on the policies.

### **VII. Administrative Items**

#### **A. Treasurer's Report for August 2024**

Dr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for August 2024. The District has seen significant property tax disbursements and combined with July, a vast majority of the second installment from the 2023 levy has been collected. The District feels fortunate to be in this position compared to years past and Dr. Johnson thanked those at Cook County for making this possible. Investments continue to perform well – 5.15% for PMA and 3.48% for long

term investments at Fifth Third. The District continues to pursue long term investments when possible and short-term investments according to its cash flow schedule. The total balances for all accounts were \$139,441,764.

## **B. Financial Report for August 2024**

Dr. Johnson presented the Financial Report for August 2024. Operating revenue for the first two months of the fiscal year was \$60,500,000, or 997% higher compared to last year, thanks to the timing of property tax distributions. The tentative budget for operating revenue shows a 4.26% increase which will even out as the year progresses.

Operating expenditures through August were \$11,471,000 or 28% higher than last year. Year to year comparisons for the first couple of months are likely to contain large variations due to the timing of purchases and journal entries that are part of the audit process. The tentative budget for operating expenditures is six percent higher than last year. The tentative budget has been updated in these reports so one can see how it compares with the numbers to date. The audit is well underway and will be presented to the Board in November. He thanked Mr. Spiwak, Director of Business Services, and the business office for their work on the audit.

## **\*C. Public Hearing: 2024-2025 Final Budget**

Ms. Hahn called to order the public hearing on the 2024-2025 final budget at 8:51 p.m. Dr. Johnson began by noting there is a balanced budget in operating funds. The District must adopt a budget each year by the end of September. It is the spending plan for the District and allows it to accomplish its goals and objectives through strong fiscal stewardship. Dr. Johnson shared how the budget supports academics, extracurricular programs, and addresses the individual needs of learners.

Mr. Spiwak provided a summary of the finances. Any variances are being compared budget to budget as the District does not have final FY 24 numbers yet. This is also primarily a look at the operating funds which includes all funds except debt service, capital projects, and health, life, and safety. The District has a revenue budget of slightly over \$141 million which is a 4.3% increase over last year's budget. On the expenditures side, there is a budget of over \$135 million which is a 6.6% increase over last year. This year, it looks as though expenses are going a little quicker than revenue, which is being watched by the District. Mr. Spiwak noted there is a surplus of \$5.7 million and that the District needs a surplus of at least \$3.5 million to pay for the alternate revenue bonds. These bonds are used to pay for a portion of the East Side Academic and Athletic project. The debt payment for the bond sale must come out of operations. After that transfer, the District will have a surplus of almost \$2.4 million. Mr. Spiwak shared further about transfers, noting ultimately, the District will use a fund balance of \$1.6 million from previous years' surplus. He then went on to share budget highlights for both revenues and expenditures.

Dr. Johnson shared the three awards that the District typically receives for its budget work. One is the *Certificate of Excellence Award in Financial Reporting* from the Association of School Business (ASBO) International. Another is from the Governors Finance Officers Association and the final is financial recognition from the Illinois State Board of Education. He then thanked all those involved in this work including the administration, the business office, the Finance Committee, and the community.

Ms. Hahn inquired if there were any public comments, of which there were none. She then invited questions and comments from the Board. Ms. Hahn noted that approving the budget is an important task of the Board. Budgets that are responsible and aligned with the District's values while supporting the type of programming that the community demands and students deserve do not just happen. She thanked Mr. Spiwak, Dr. Johnson, and the business office for their work.

Mr. Das moved, and Mr. Dronen seconded the motion that the Board of Education move to Adjourn the Public Hearing on the 2024-2025 Final Budget. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

The public hearing was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

## **\*D. 2024-2025 Final Budget Approval**

Mr. Das moved, and Mr. Dronen seconded the motion that the Board of Education approves the Resolution to Adopt the Annual Budget for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year and the School District Budget, as presented. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

**\*E. Consideration and action on a resolution authorizing the issue of not to exceed \$25,000,000 general obligation alternate revenue bonds to pay the costs 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**

Dr. Johnson presented on the consideration and action on a resolution authorizing the issue of not to exceed \$25,000,000 general obligation alternate revenue bonds to pay the costs 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. At the August Board meeting, the Board approved moving forward with several facilities projects that have been discussed over the past year. One of these projects is the next phase of the renovation of the North and Tower Buildings that will improve spaces for Science, Student Services and Campus Administration. The District is excited about the benefits this will bring to students, as it modernizes learning and support spaces while also improving energy efficiency and safety. This work will occur over three years, beginning this summer. The largest component of funding will be \$25 million in alternate revenue bonds. This is the same funding method that was used for the East Side Academic and Athletic Project, where annual debt service is paid from the operational budget. When the District embarked on that project with conservative financial assumptions, it did not believe it would have another opportunity to use that method again for several years. A careful examination of the District's past financial performance and future projections show that it will be able to use this funding method going forward for this project. This resolution is the first step in issuing these bonds, which will be rated by Moody's and sold this winter. He invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Hahn noted that this is the final action for the Board with Dr. Johnson responding that the Finance Committee has been working on this for the past year and the Board has heard about it several times.

Ms. Pofcher moved, and Mr. Dronen seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the resolution of intent to issue Alternate Revenue bonds as presented. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

**VIII. Consent Agenda**

- Bill List for Period, August 1 - 31, 2024
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Resignations, Stipends - Appointments, and Stipends - Separation)
- Resolution Authorizing the Prompt Payment of Bills
- Siebel Center Memorandum of Understanding
- Resolution Authorizing Transfer of Funds from the Operations and Maintenance Fund to the Capital Projects Fund
- Resolutions Transferring Moneys from the Operations and Maintenance Fund to the Debt Service Fund
- Resolution of the Board Of Education providing Operational Resources for the New Trier Township High School District 203 Educational Foundation
- Board action on uniform grievance complaint appeal
- Contract with Cashman Stahler Group for architectural services for Northfield and Winnetka Campus Health Life Safety Plumbing Projects
- Health Life Safety Amendments Approval
- ISBE Compensation Report

Ms. Hahn inquired if any members wanted to pull an item off the Consent Agenda, no one chose to do so. Ms. Pofcher moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: Bill List for Period, August 1 - 31,



2024; Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Resignations, Stipends – Appointments, and Stipends – Separation); Resolution Authorizing the Prompt Payment of Bills; Siebel Center Memorandum of Understanding Resolution of the Board of Education directing the School Treasurer to transfer funds from the Operations and Maintenance Fund to the Capital Projects Fund; Resolutions Transferring Moneys from the Operations and Maintenance Fund to the Debt Service Fund; Resolution of the Board of Education providing Operational Resources for the New Trier Township High School District 203 Educational Foundation; Based upon and after the Board's consideration of the written appeal filed on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 pursuant to Board Policy 2:260, Uniform Grievance Procedure that the Board of Education affirm the Superintendent's Uniform Grievance decision dated August 23, 2024; Contract with Cashman Stahler Group for architectural services for Northfield and Winnetka Campus Health Life Safety Plumbing Projects; Health Life Safety Amendments as presented; and ISBE Compensation Report. Mr. Dronen seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

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

NAY: none

The motion passed.

## **IX. Board Member Reports**

Ms. McDonough noted that she was unable to attend the **New Trier Parents Association (NTPA)** meeting, but did join for a social event. They are busy preparing for parent coffees for each class, school-wide programs and topics of interest for parents, teacher appreciation events, and planning for the graduation party. They are doing a lot of outreach through email and social media to ensure parents are in the loop with back-to-school information.

Ms. McDonough noted that the first **Community Engagement Committee** meeting of the year will be on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Dronen shared that the **Booster Club** will meet tomorrow, and he will be in attendance.

Ms. Alcantara shared that the **New Trier Fine Arts Association (NTFAA)** met on September 11<sup>th</sup>. It was an introductory meeting with an overview of the organization, its mission, along with reports from various administrators. She looks forward to serving on the committee and supporting them as a liaison.

On September 11<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Alcantara noted that the **Policy Committee** met to review the policies that were presented earlier in the meeting.

Ms. Tomlinson shared that the **Environmental Committee** met via Zoom on September 10<sup>th</sup>. The focus of the meeting was spent discussing the development of the sustainability plan that will be presented to the Board next spring. Various constituencies, including faculty, staff, and community members, provided input on elements they would like to see reflected in the work. From Ms. Tomlinson's perspective, she would like to see how the plan is going to be integrated across the six areas of the Strategic Plan, as well as how success will be measured of the initiatives coming out of the sustainability plan. There is also additional interest from faculty and students in joining the committee. An in-person meeting will be held after school this fall as the planning process moves forward.

Mr. Das met with the **TrueNorth Leadership Council** on August 21<sup>st</sup>. The meeting included celebrations of staff, as well as information on trainings and national presentations. An ongoing piece of business is to manage the process of membership, including if a school district is looking to withdraw their membership. Those deliberations are ongoing, and the next meeting is on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Pofcher noted the next **Community Engagement Committee**, like Ms. McDonough noted, is September 25<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Pofcher was unable to attend the **Booster Club** meeting and thanked Mr. Dronen for his future attendance.

Ms. Hahn shared that the **New Trier Educational Foundation (NTEF)** meets on Thursday. They are running the School Spirit Showdown between New Trier and the foundation at Evanston High School. It is based on the number of donations, not the size of them. Donations will be gathered from now until the New Trier vs. Evanston football game.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following events:

- Homecoming events are taking place this weekend.
- Two performing arts events take place next week: Lagniappe and the fall play.
- Trev Fest is on Saturday, September 28<sup>th</sup>.
- The first weekend in October is fall break.
- Freshman Go-to-School Night occurs on Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>.
- The end of first quarter will happen before the next Board meeting.
- With the switch to ACT, the Illinois Science Assessment is no longer needed. What was an early dismissal day on March 4<sup>th</sup>, has been changed to a late start day.

Ms. Hahn inquired if there were any requests for staff research or future agenda items, of which there were none.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

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Jean Hahn, President