

BOARD BRIEFS

News from the New Trier Township High School District 203

Board of Education Regular Meeting

July 12, 2021

Update on Planning for the 2021-2022 School Year

New Trier will continue to follow guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Illinois Department of Public Health for a safe return to school in 2021-2022, including the recent guidance that vaccinated students and staff do not need to wear masks in schools, Superintendent Paul Sally told the Board.

Sally noted that the District and its health advisory board will meet to review guidance for non-vaccinated students and staff, social distancing recommendations, and other topics. New Trier will communicate that guidance to families in late July or early August and hold a parent back-to-school webinar on August 16. The District has strong COVID-19 mitigation efforts in place, including enhanced ventilation, cleaning, contact tracing, and hand hygiene reminders.

New Trier will operate with full in-person learning five days a week in accordance with the state's directive, Sally said. The school will make provisions for students to complete work at home if they must quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure or diagnosis, though families should not expect a hybrid learning option. Vaccinated students who have no symptoms will not need to quarantine for COVID-19 exposure per health department guidelines.

Send COVID-19 Vaccination Records to Health Services

Families who have not already done so should send their students' COVID-19 vaccination records to healthservices@nthsh.net. Having these records will help the school assess its vaccination rate, which could inform decisions on school operations. In addition, vaccinated students do not need to quarantine for COVID-19 exposure or wear masks in school, per federal and state health guidelines.

Calendar Change for State Testing

The Board approved a change to the [2021-2022 calendar](#) due to mandatory state testing. The state is not allowing testing on the District's original tentative date of Tuesday, April 12. In order to keep a consistent blue/green block schedule calendar for both campuses, state testing will now take place on Wednesday, April 13 for Winnetka Campus students and Monday, April 18 for Northfield Campus students.

Click for the [Board presentation on 2021-2022 school year planning](#).

Progress Continues on Winnetka Campus Academic and Athletic Project

New Trier has made significant progress in planning for the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project, including unanimous approval from the Village of Winnetka for necessary zoning variances, continued design refinements, a security evaluation, and budget adjustments following the submission of two cost estimates.

The project is due to break ground in December and includes a new multipurpose competition gym, a 6-lane indoor track, a dozen new classroom spaces, new auxiliary gyms, new strength and conditioning facilities, and a new climbing wall and high ropes course.

The District presented its plans to several Village of Winnetka boards and commissions for approval to proceed. Associate Superintendent Chris Johnson told the board that village officials expressed strong community support and excitement about the project.

Refinement of the design of the new facility continues, including changes based on a security evaluation by District consultants. The design assures easy egress in case of emergency and supports designated safe areas for students if they cannot leave the building. The design also includes electronic door locks, building isolation technology, security vestibules, and shatter resistant glass.

Following the conclusion of the project's design development phase, construction manager Pepper Construction and independent cost estimator Concord Construction Consulting submitted cost estimates based on building materials, design, and assumptions about material and labor costs.

Both estimators identified a significant increase in the price of steel, from the \$9 million estimated in January to \$12 million today, as affecting the project cost. The District has worked to reduce other parts of the budget to offset this increase and to create alternative additions and deductions for future bidding. While experts expect commodity prices to drop in the coming months, the District may be faced with more difficult choices if they do not. The current estimated project cost is \$75.43 million, a 0.22% increase from the original \$75.27 million estimate. The project budget includes an 11% contingency.

Click for the [construction project update to the Board](#).

Board Approves *New Trier 2030 Annual Plan, Characteristics of a New Trier Graduate*

The Board approved the District's Annual Plan for working toward its [New Trier 2030](#) strategic goals and endorsed the *Characteristics of a New Trier Graduate*, a set of future-oriented narratives and desired student outcomes that will help guide the District's teaching and learning into the future.

Peter Tragos, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, presented the Board with the proposed *Characteristics of a New Trier Graduate* at the June meeting. Members expressed support for the guiding principles, including the five characteristics New Trier graduates are becoming as they leave high school:

- **Engaged Compassionate Global Citizens:** *New Trier graduates strive to be informed about historical and contemporary issues, embracing diversity and taking responsibility for improving their local and global communities. They develop the capacity to show respect, acceptance, and empathy for all people so they can optimistically pursue positive change.*
- **Creative Critical Thinkers:** *New Trier graduates learn to ask important questions, and they seek multiple perspectives with open-mindedness. They rigorously analyze and evaluate information to draw reasoned conclusions in pursuit of knowledge and understanding of complex ideas.*
- **Resilient Healthy Individuals:** *New Trier graduates learn to take ownership over their physical and mental wellness. As they work to develop a healthy sense of self, they adapt to challenges and changes with resilience, flexibility, and perseverance. They demonstrate responsibility for themselves and care for others.*
- **Effective Courageous Communicators:** *New Trier graduates communicate clearly and confidently in multiple modes of expression including nonverbal, creative and artistic, to inform and inspire others. They navigate communication technology ethically and responsibly. Our graduates listen to understand, and courageously engage in matters important to them and to the world.*
- **Innovative Collaborative Problem Solvers:** *New Trier graduates mature as agents of their own learning, motivated by curiosity and independent thought to know more about themselves and the world. They recognize the power of collaboration and feedback as they take intellectual risks to solve problems, imagine creative solutions and invent a better future.*

The Board also endorsed an Annual Plan for 2021-2022 that works toward multiple goals outlined in *New Trier 2030* in areas including academics, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), social-emotional learning (SEL), equity, facilities, community engagement, and the adviser program.

Superintendent Paul Sally acknowledged that the Annual Plan must recognize the difficulty of the past school year while providing direction to re-engage in the work of the strategic plan. The school will move forward with the annual plan while also working on the 2021-2022 theme of Reconnect, Reclaim, and Reinvent - a theme meant to re-establish the feeling of community in the school and to support students after an unprecedented year.

Click for the [2021-2022 Annual Plan presentation](#).

[Other News from the July 12 Meeting:](#)

- The Board approved the [tentative FY2022 budget](#) and set a public hearing date for the budget at the September meeting. Associate Superintendent Chris Johnson said the tentative budget reflects an anticipated return to normal operations after the challenges faced in the 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The \$118 million operating budget is balanced, with an expected \$266,129 surplus anticipated after the District makes a planned transfer of funds from the operating budget to make payments that support the East Side Academic and Athletics Project.

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://nths.mediaspace.kaltura.com/category/BOARD+OF+EDUCATION/>

Information about Board of Education members, upcoming meetings, agendas, minutes, and other documents are available at <http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/boardofeducation/>