

BOARD BRIEFS

News from the New Trier Township High School District 203

Board of Education Regular Meeting

May 16, 2022

15-Year Facility Framework Guides Major Improvements to Campuses

New Trier has used its 15-Year Facility Framework to make major improvements to both of its campuses over the past several years while staying within its budget and without a referendum to increase the District's tax rate.

Associate Superintendent Chris Johnson led a discussion of facility improvements that are underway and that the school has completed since the Board adopted the 15-Year Framework in 2019.

The framework was adopted shortly after the completion of the Winnetka Campus West Side Project, which opened in 2017 and was the most significant improvement to that campus since the 1950s. The District used standards developed during that project for instructional spaces, energy efficiency, maintenance, and security to evaluate future needs at both campuses, aligning them with the New Trier's strategic planning goals.

Some of the plan goals achieved thus far, including projects from 2018 and 2019 that were part of the plan but completed before its final adoption, are:

- The addition of 57 new and renovated classrooms to both campuses by the start of the 2023-2024 school year - classrooms that meet modern standards for size, furniture, and technology
- Renovation of the Northfield Campus Library and the entire 3rd floor of the Winnetka Campus
- Significant enhancements to mechanical systems, improving reliability and efficiency of heating and cooling, replacing aging doors and windows, and accessibility improvements
- Investment in energy efficiency, including shifting almost all campus lighting to LED, replacement of steam boilers with hot water boilers, and the planned installation of solar panels at the Northfield Campus in the coming year - improvements that have lowered the District's energy costs over the past 10 years
- Security improvements at both campuses, including the addition of secure entry vestibules at both campuses and fencing at the Northfield Campus, as well as enhanced video surveillance and a new lockdown system
- Creation of the New Trier Transition Center in Glencoe, set to open in the fall

The District has been able to accomplish these facility goals while moving ahead with another major project at the Winnetka Campus, the East Side Academic and Athletic Project, funded with existing resources provided by our taxpayers and without the need for a facility referendum. When completed at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, the project will include a new main gym, an auxiliary gym, indoor track, climbing wall, fitness center, and 13 new classrooms.

Johnson said the administration continues to review and prioritize needs for future years, including the continued renovation of portions of the 1934 North Building and 1957 Tower Building at the Winnetka Campus, upgrades to science labs, continued energy efficiency improvements, and the potential for creating a new aquatic center to replace the inadequate Northfield Campus pool.

Board members praised the District for meeting and exceeding its 15-Year Facility Framework goals while maintaining strong financial stewardship of resources provided by the community. Following the presentation, the Board approved work planned for the summer of 2023, including Northfield Campus classroom technology and furniture upgrades in the C and E Buildings, improvements to Duke Childs Field under an intergovernmental agreement with the Village of Winnetka, a second phase of renovations to the New Trier Transition Center in Glencoe, installation of solar panels at the Northfield Campus, and mechanical upgrades.

Click for the [15-Year Facility Framework presentation](#).

2022-2023 School Year Calendar Updates

The Board approved a few changes to the 2022-2023 school year calendar, including moving two paired early dismissal days from Monday/Tuesday to Thursday/Friday and adopting a new first-day schedule to provide orientation and community-building time for freshmen and sophomores.

The school year calendar includes four pairs of shortened schedule days for professional development time for staff. Superintendent Paul Sally told the Board that the District considered feedback from parents in moving two of those early dismissal pairs to Thursday/Friday, allowing families to leave early for the weekend for college visits or other trips. The calendar adopted by the Board now includes four early dismissal Fridays.

In prior years, the paired shortened schedule days generally included an early dismissal Friday and late start Monday. However, the new block schedule for 2022-2023 includes blue/green pairs each Monday/Tuesday and Thursday/Friday with an anchor day (all classes) on Wednesdays. Sally explained that the schedule provides continuity of structure to each week for teachers and students, so splitting the shortened days between Friday and Monday would disrupt that weekly structure.

Sally also told the Board that leaders at both campuses are excited to introduce a new first day of school schedule that provides orientation time for freshmen and sophomores. Freshmen will spend half the day in welcome activities and the second half attending classes on a shortened schedule. Sophomores will start the day in an orientation and special adviser room before attending classes on a shortened schedule. The day will follow the typical arrival and dismissal times for freshmen and sophomores, while juniors and seniors will arrive at school for adviser room at 9:00 a.m. instead of 8:20 a.m. Dismissal will be on the normal schedule for all groups. \

Click for the [2022-2023 school year calendar](#) and [first day of school schedules](#).

Strategic Focus for 2022-2023: Student Support, Civil Discourse, Restorative Practices

Superintendent Paul Sally continued his monthly updates to the Board on the development of an Annual Plan for 2022-2023 to support goals outlined in the District's strategic plan, [New Trier 2030](#).

Sally said two main themes for the coming school year have emerged in discussions with staff, students, community members, and parents: (1) addressing the increased complexity and needs of New Trier students and (2) critical thinking, civil discourse, and restorative practices.

The return to full-time in-person school following the pandemic has come with increased needs for students across the country, and New Trier is seeing many of those same needs. More students have been hospitalized this year than in past years, and more students need support for mental health concerns. Sally outlined goals to offer robust support in the coming year, including the evolution of available student services, enhanced use of technology to identify students who may need support, and a Freshman Success program focusing on building academic and social-emotional skills.

In student services, the District continues to develop and align its levels of support for students in areas of need such as executive functioning, self-management, stress management, or substance use. In the coming year, the focus will be on continuing to provide strong universal strategies in the classroom while identifying students who need a further level of intervention, monitoring their progress as they access different supports. The Technology Department is working with Student Services and Curriculum and Instruction to develop systems that can help identify students who may need additional support, with systems that look at concerns about grades or attendance, for example.

The Northfield Campus will implement a Freshman Success program in which all students will engage in lessons in areas including: executive functioning, technology skills, social-emotional skills, and Trevian behavior. These topics will be integrated into different classroom activities and in the adviser room.

The District will continue its departmental presentations to the Board next year focusing on Critical Thinking and Civil Discourse, emphasizing the importance of developing both "hard skills" in each discipline and "soft skills" that will help students achieve their post-high school goals. One goal is to make the District's Critical Thinking and Civil Discourse statement more visible to students and to the community.

Finally, the Adviser Chairs and other leaders in classrooms, clubs, athletic teams, and performing arts groups will continue to implement restorative practices as a way to promote student development in disciplinary cases. These practices help students understand the consequences of their actions while repairing relationships that may have been damaged.

Click for the [New Trier 2030 Update](#).

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

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

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