

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

**April 17, 2023**

**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, April 17, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

**Members Present**

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

**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  
Mr. Paul Waechtler, Principal – Northfield Campus

**Also Present**

Dr. Michael Marassa, Chief Technology Officer; Ms. Niki Dizon, Director of Communications; Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Teri Rodgers, Social Studies Department Faculty and Education Association President; Ms. Liz Mayer, New Trier Educational Foundation Executive Director; Mr. Jon Lespeska, Math Department Faculty; Ms. Tiffany Myers, Social Work Department Chair; Mr. Rai Pavely, Director of Campus Security; Ms. Katja Steen, Modern and Classical Languages Department Faculty; Mr. Eric Duffett, Business Education Department Faculty; Members of the New Trier Educational Foundation; Ms. Mercedes Lopez, Modern and Classical Languages Department Faculty; Ms. Laura Hessling, Science Department Faculty; Ms. Tracy Smith, Science Department Faculty; Mr. Jeff Bailey, Lead Support Specialist; Mr. Eric Johnson, Technology Department; Mr. Mike Hill, Technology Department; Ms. Lindsey Ruston, Board of Education Secretary; members of the press and community.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER – 5:30 p.m. – C234**

Mr. Dronen called the Regular Meeting of April 17, 2023, of the Board of Education to order at 5:32 p.m. in room C234 at the Northfield campus. Roll call was taken, and all members were present.

Mr. Dronen asked for a motion to move to Closed Session. Mr. Das 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; 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 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. Ms. Hahn seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht, Mr. Dronen

NAY: none

The motion passed.

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

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

Mr. Dronen recalled the Regular Meeting of April 17, 2023, of the Board of Education to order at 6:41 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 March 20, 2023 (open and closed session)**

Mr. Dronen asked for any comments or adjustments on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 20, 2023 (open and closed session). There was one request for changes to the minutes requested by Ms. Hahn, which was incorporated. Ms. Hahn moved, and Mr. Das seconded the motion, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 20, 2023 (open and closed session), as minorly amended. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Ms. Hahn, Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Mr. Dronen

NAY: none

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:

- Recently, there was a water main break. He thanked Physical Plant Services (PPS) for working over 30 straight hours to fix the issue which was twelve feet underground.
- Service is a large focus for the fourth quarter with adviser rooms doing various tasks such as packing lunch for the homeless and Girls Club writing letters to those veterans who were taking an Honor Flight.
- Freshman Adviser Room Olympics are taking place as a way to build community in anticipation of the adviser room moving on to the Winnetka campus. There has been a door decorating contest with other activities planned over the next few weeks.
- The CSL Art Show is taking place and has 650 works from 12 different schools as a way to promote strong visual arts programs. New Trier had 65 students from both campuses participating. There is a reception this Thursday at The Art Center in Highland Park.
- Mr. Waechtler thanked the New Trier Fine Arts Association for providing funding for professional improviser, Ms. Caroline Nash. Ms. Nash worked with all Theatre 1 classes to create original characters through improv.

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

- New Trier hosted a book talk with author Dr. Lisa Damour last week. Several staff members attended including Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and Special Education, Ms. Tiffany Myers, Social Work Department Chair, Mr. Andrew Milne, Kinetic Wellness Department Faculty, and Ms. Kris Hummel, Student Assistance Program Coordinator. The Library Department helped to facilitate the event. Mrs. Dubravec shared that she worked with the Mental Health Advisory Board, who meet with Ms. Hummel and Ms. Susan Antonini, Student Assistance Program Liaison. This board is passionate about supporting students in mental health. These students were seated with groups of parents and helped to facilitate the book talk. After this, Dr. Damour joined the group via Zoom and spent time sharing practical and meaningful advice. Ms. Tomlinson inquired if a link is available to view the time with Dr. Damour, which Mrs. Dubravec said it is not. However, Dr. Damour was with the Surgeon General the evening before and there is a link available for that conversation.
- Mrs. Dubravec shared her appreciation for the Parents' Association and the time they spend on the graduation party. Meetings begin in August and continue throughout the year. The group ensures that students have a safe space to be after graduation. Invitations were sent last Tuesday, and the theme is Sky's the Limit.
- Mrs. Dubravec hosted Principal's March Madness for adviser rooms and it is a charity fundraiser. Breakfast is provided for the adviser rooms who select the top men's basketball team as well as the top women's team. Student Council hosted a staff versus students' basketball game as well.
- Mrs. Dubravec shared pictures from various places that students went over spring break. Girls' soccer and lacrosse, along with boys' baseball all travelled. The music program travelled with 130 students to the Lincoln Center in New York City. She thanked staff for all the work that goes into these trips.
- GrubHub founder, Mr. Mike Evans, presented to the DECA club about his startup as well as had a Q&A with students.
- Student Council recently elected their new officers for next school year. The group has done some wonderful work such as with equity. They also applied for the 2023 National Gold Council of Excellence which can be a grueling process. Not only do they present to the principal but there are certain criteria that must be met. They were one of four high schools in Illinois who received this honor.

- The Be Brave, Be Kind, Be Proud work has been ongoing with the school's extracurricular programs. A day is spent with student leaders which is facilitated by an adviser chair and Ms. Cindy Fialka, Math Department Faculty and Strategic Planning Liaison. These leaders are then taught how to facilitate with their own teams about how they want to develop the culture within their program. She shared further details around this.
- Mrs. Dubravec recently hosted a Principal's Signing Day for those students who may not play on a New Trier team but are going to continue with their sport after high school.
- The Athletics Signing Day also took place with around 30 students who will go on to play competitively at the college level. There will also be a signing day for music and theatre students who are pursuing a degree in this.
- Prom is Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at the Hyatt Regency in Chicago.

Dr. Joanne Panopoulos, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and Special Education, shared an update on attendance. She noted that the committee continues to meet bi-weekly. There is a planned communication that will be sent to families on April 24<sup>th</sup>, as a way to partner with them and improve student attendance. Feedback was gathered from the parents' association and excused absences from parents will be added, but it will not include field trips, kinetic wellness waivers, and medical exemptions.

Dr. Johnson gave the FOIA report, noting that there were six requests since the last Board meeting, one remains open regarding construction bids. Closed reports include one for a copy of the District's mission statement, another for bid tabulations, one for contracts between the District and food service providers, one for Board votes on IASB resolutions and one on employment contracts.

## **V. Communications**

Mr. Dronen 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 two requests for public comment. Mr. Dronen shared a couple of reminders for speakers asking them to keep their comments to three minutes or less per Board Policy 2-230 and that they refrain from clapping or a response of any kind in regard to other's comments.

1. Mr. Bruce Brandt, parent, grandparent and taxpayer, shared concerns about being left out of the equation when decisions are made about what is good for kids. He went on to share comments about this.
2. Ms. Bernie Hossfeld, community member, shared what she learned during her campaign for one of the open New Trier High School Board of Education seats.

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

### **A. NTEF Grants Presentation**

Ms. Liz Mayer, New Trier Educational Foundation Executive (NTEF) Director, presented on the foundation's grants and grant process. These grants, named the Marran grants after retired social studies teacher Mr. Jim Marran who played an integral part in the Foundation, support a wide range of projects proposed by teachers. These tend to be shorter term, one-year projects. The Foundation is also working with administration on the human-centered design Innovation Hub, which is an example of long-term, larger funding with a multi-year focus. NTEF also has events such as Pitch Night and WNTH banquet, which are done in collaboration with faculty. There is also the Gala that the Foundation hosts on a biennial basis. The events are a cyclical process as they bring in people and funding which helps to create predictability.

Ms. Mayer shared that the Foundation has given well over 200 grants to date. The NTEF was founded in 2001. She went on to share further information about the grant cycles, noting that the spring cycle is currently open, and decisions on those grants will be made at NTEF's June meeting. There is also a fall cycle in which decisions on grants are made at their December meeting. She provided details on the past four cycles, noting that Covid had a significant impact. In the most recent cycle, fall 2022, there were 13 applications ten of which were approved. Ms. Mayer shared further information about the approved grants.

Next, she explained the grant process, noting that applications are opened about six weeks before the decision deadline. Submitted applications undergo an initial review and are then sent to the Grant Committee as well as select administrators for comment and guidance. A new addition to the process is that NTEF representatives meet with each teacher. This addition of this step has provided the committee important information for its decision-making process. A Foundation board member meets with each applicant, which allows an opportunity to further understand the grant and to build relationships between NTEF and teachers. The Grant Committee meets before the NTEF board meeting

to discuss the grants and make recommendations, which is then presented to the Foundation's board for final approval.

Ms. Mayer shared the selection criteria which align with the Foundation's mission as well as New Trier's strategic plan. NTEF also ensures these grants have a meaningful impact on students. Grants are also reviewed for their unique enhancement and/or partnerships such as bringing in experts or community members.

Next, Ms. Mayer shared examples of recent grants. The first was Go Baby Go in which Applied Arts students designed and modified PowerWheel cars for children with mobility challenges. Students participated in the fitting day as well and were able to see the direct impact of their work. NTEF also supports the Identity Project on the Northfield campus which aligns with the social emotional and equity components of the strategic plan. Another example shared was the last grant given prior to Covid which was for a composer visit to the music and theatre department with Mr. Omar Thomas. Finally, the Foundation supported therapy dog training for Ms. Kris Hummel, Student Assistance Program Coordinator, and her dog, Gracie. The Foundation is excited to have the opportunity to supply more grants and be a resource for the school. Ms. Mayer then invited NTEF board chair, Mr. Rob Faurot, and vice chair, Ms. Sara Elsasser, to join her for questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Hahn thanked Ms. Mayer and the Foundations' board for sharing the extraordinary work of the grants. While not the big-ticket items, they are part of the NTEF's annual process and support the work of New Trier's strategic plan. Ms. Hahn noted several grant projects and how they have connected a unique concept and innovative ways of thinking through interdisciplinary, experiential, and exploratory learning experiences. Ms. Hahn shared that these opportunities ignite students' passion for thinking and learning and fuel their pursuit of these interests well beyond their years at New Trier. She went on to share that the lifelong commitment to service and learning demonstrated by the members of the Foundation, many of whom no longer have students in the District, model for students the ideals embodied in the New Trier motto. Ms. Hahn noted that while students and faculty are always at the core of the work done at New Trier, it is the generous contributions and close partnerships with the wider community, like those made by Foundation board members, that truly sets the District apart and makes it exceptional. Ms. Hahn has been the Board's liaison to the Foundation this year and has enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about its work and looks forward to continuing to support those efforts. She thanked them for their continued partnership.

Ms. Tomlinson noted that there were about \$89,000 worth of grants given in 2022 which is remarkable and is substantial support that advances the District's strategic goals in a way that might not happen without the Foundation. Ms. Tomlinson is participating in the teachers' bargaining sessions and this presentation resonated with her as the work of the Foundation supports teachers and staff. Funding a program that a teacher is passionate about not only helps students, but hopefully it helps to fill the teacher's cup and lets them know that their work is appreciated. Ms. Mayer shared an anecdote in response.

Ms. Albrecht noted that the most recent grant approvals were for \$54,000, which is an increase compared to other years. She inquired if it was the highest approval, to which Ms. Mayer shared it was the largest cycle to date. Ms. Albrecht then inquired if applications for spring 2023 are being submitted, to which Ms. Mayer noted that applications opened four days ago, and one has been submitted. She anticipates more closer to the deadline. Mr. Faurot added he anticipates that the Foundation will see extended interest in applications going forward as it seems to be the trend. Dr. Sally shared one beneficial piece about the grants is that the Foundation provides an agile and responsive addition to our system so a teacher can explore a new idea in short order since there will be a funding cycle in the near future.

Ms. Alcantara inquired how the NTEF events came to be and whether they come as independent ideas from the board or are proposed by administration or faculty. She also inquired about any event ideas for the future. Ms. Mayer shared that the Gala, started in 2011 and formerly known as the Alumni Achievement Awards, was a Foundation and Administration partnership. She shared that the majority of events come to them from a partnership perspective. A current event is the Day of Service which was created by the Young Alumni Leadership Council and embodies the school's motto. The other two events are Pitch Night and the WNTH banquet. They began as grants and grew from there. The Foundation's grant cycle will support a program for three years and then either the District needs to take over or another adjustment is needed. Ms. Alcantara is one of the Board's liaisons to the Community Engagement Committee and the idea of community building events is intriguing to her as something that the Foundation may embark upon or may collaborate with the administration on.

Mr. Dronen thanked Ms. Mayer, Mr. Faurot, Ms. Elsasser and members of the Foundation. He went back to a comment that Ms. Hahn made, noting that education is a life-long process and thanked the NTEF for their dedication. He noted that the work that is being done is having a meaningful impact on students. He concluded his comments by sharing about the partnership between the Foundation and the District.

## **B. School Safety Presentation**

Dr. Sally introduced the presentation on school safety, noting that for the last five years the District has been on a security journey to continually improve its awareness, facilities, processes, and procedures. This presentation is a way to keep families informed. It is also important to keep students updated and informed and there will be a lockdown review and training for students later in April. Dr. Sally noted that the District has put in significant facilities improvements over the last five years such as secure vestibules and fencing. While the District has always had someone in charge of safety and security, it recently hired a new Director of Campus Safety, who has significant background and expertise in this area. The District is in good shape in each of these areas, but it needs to constantly review how it can improve and ensure that the buildings and students are safe. Dr. Sally briefly outlined an overview of safety and security, noting most importantly that the District's approach to it focuses on relationships with students by knowing them and making sure they feel like they belong. This is the most important factor in preventing harm to self or others.

Mrs. Dubravec shared an overview of the agenda and began with the four layers of prevention, safety and security. The first layer is connection, support, and prevention; relationships are the top priority. The second layer is relationships with community partners that support New Trier. The third layer, physical safety measures and daily procedures include ensuring the buildings are safe and procedures are communicated clearly. The last layer is emergency procedures and readiness, which includes keeping up to date on best practices and training and then sharing it with staff, students, and the community.

Next, Mrs. Dubravec shared about connections, support, and preventions, which includes building strong relationships with every student and staff member, so they feel like they belong. Students learn better when they know there are staff who care for them. According to a New Trier alumni survey, 94% of respondents felt there was at least one adult at school who cares about them. This percentage is one of the highest among comparable schools. Students who do not feel as though they belong might be more likely to miss school, not as successful with their academic outcomes, and may be at greater risk for high-risk behaviors. After additional comments, Mrs. Dubravec shared about the intentionality of the school's work. This can be seen in the adviser program which is purposefully set at the beginning of the day and is a way for advisers to check-in with their students and to offer additional supports if needed. The Graduating Class Teams is another example and will be a set of individuals who will remain with a class of students as they move through New Trier. This will allow the team to get to know students and their families. The school also offers a robust extracurricular program along with clubs and Affinity groups. The social work department is another area where the school is intentional about its work by making sure the department is able to support both students and staff. The school partners with families through parent programming with the Parents' Association and open dialogue with families. Mrs. Dubravec, referencing a comment made earlier by Ms. Alcantara, shared that she is also invested in ways to bring parents and families together. She shared that Trev Fest was created as a way to bring people together. A final measure is "See Something, Say Something" and teaching students what that means and who they can go to.

Mrs. Dubravec shared about law enforcement, security, and support, noting the hiring of the Director of Campus Safety. She noted that the District has a wonderful working relationship with the police and fire departments. There are also many community supports via The Family Institute, The Josselyn Center, NTPA, and the Family Action Network. Other partnerships include Compass and Haven as well as private practice referrals. Dr. Sally also has strong relationships with the superintendents of the District's sender schools. The District has national support through Dr. Damour as well as the consortium network of high schools across the country.

Mrs. Dubravec outlined physical safety measures and daily procedures which are largely about prevention and planning ahead. The District has proactive emergency management plans including prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response. According to the 2019 CSCI data, students, staff, and parents rated highly that they feel safe in the building. She then went through various safety measures and daily procedures that are in place such as students scanning their IDs upon arrival, limited entry points, TrevTips online reporting, video surveillance, and a school resource officer.

Finally, Mrs. Dubravec shared about emergency procedures and readiness which includes a comprehensive crisis

management plan. There are yearly emergency drills with police and fire departments present as well as signage and identification of safe spaces for lockdown. The school is also a site for hosting local law enforcement training. She also shared about communication capabilities to staff, students, and families. Mrs. Dubravec then provided details about the supports and resources that can be found on the school's website. She then displayed various pictures that showed students participating in different activities and shared how they connect students.

Mrs. Dubravec introduced Mr. Raimond Pavely, Director of Campus Safety. Mr. Pavely recently retired from the Wilmette police department after 21 years of service. During his time with Wilmette, he was a school resource officer responsible for 13 schools. He noted the importance of building relationships with students and staff. Since starting, he has assessed what is in place and is making changes when necessary. He noted that the District has done some great things prior to his arrival, and he will build on that. One focus will be on continual improvement of training for security staff. He is also in the process of reviewing and updating emergency procedures. Mr. Dronen congratulated and welcomed Mr. Pavely to New Trier.

Dr. Sally emphasized how important it is that strong relationships are built with students, and they are treated as individuals. Dr. Sally noted that our staff is very good at this. He also commented that building a culture of See Something, Say Something is important. After other comments, Dr. Sally shared that the District has an experienced team and having Mr. Pavely join has been a good addition to it. Dr. Sally noted that the District is well-prepared and is staying vigilant while continuing to improve and look at best practices. Dr. Sally invited questions and comments from the Board.

Mr. McLane has appreciated during his time on the Board, the understanding and embracing of the need for security and not just for hardening the perimeter, but for engaging with students. He also spoke to continuous improvement, best practices, who does this well and how the school ingests that. Mr. McLane noted his appreciation for Mr. Pavely's background and the expertise and knowledge that he brings. He looks forward to that continuing so the school remains a positive atmosphere and students, teachers, and staff feel that they are in a secure place where they can focus on learning, growing, and evolving.

Mr. McLane then inquired how the District is influencing gun safety with parents and at-home. Dr. Sally replied that areas such as safety and suicide prevention are taught in health classes and that gun safety matters. There are also links on the school's website to safe gun storage and other resources. With the lockdown at Highland Park and the incident at Sears School, the District felt it was important to share with the community that if a family has a gun, please store it safely.

Ms. Tomlinson shared her appreciation for the coordination and effort for managing all these layers and to creating these relationships. She was also encouraged to hear that the school is forming a committee that includes students, staff, parents, and a possible Board member. She then inquired as to the goal of the committee. Dr. Sally replied that part of the work will be to ensure that the District is communicating what it is doing in the right way and that staff and students feel comfortable while parents also have an understanding of what the school is doing. If something is missing in this, it then needs to be worked on. The committee will also listen to the voices of students, staff, and parents about how safe they feel and what else might be done. The District will also use the committee so that when the school makes changes they are discussed with the group, feedback is gathered, and it ensures that they are well thought out.

Ms. Hahn welcomed Mr. Pavely. She noted that it was shared that a large piece of the layered approach is making sure that every student feels like they belong, and a statistic was cited that 94% of students feel they have a trusted adult they can go to. She inquired where that statistic came from as well as about the remaining 6% of students who do not feel that way. Dr. Sally replied that the statistic comes from surveys, most often alumni ones. Although the six percent are not always easy to identify, the school does look for those who are not involved in extracurriculars or are struggling academically. The school then works with them and their family. The Graduating Class Teams are that structure that can help identify those students more readily. Mrs. Dubravec provided the example of a parent coming to the school sharing that their student does not participate in a program at New Trier, but that they would like them to have a similar experience to those who do, such as with Signing Day. She went on to say that it is about finding ways to value what students are doing both inside and outside the school. Mrs. Dubravec shared about the "Principal Spotlight" that is on her Principal's Page which highlights what students are doing outside the school.

Ms. Hahn referenced the Threat Assessment Team and inquired if they are internal teams and if the school works with external advisors. Mrs. Dubravec replied that it is an internal team who knows a student and also includes the

school resource officer.

Ms. Hahn referenced the annual safety drills and the emergency procedures and inquired when learning that comes from incidents that occur is incorporated. Mrs. Dubravec referenced the incident in Nashville and shared that conversations take place soon after to determine if there is anything that the school should know and learn from the event. Mr. Pavely noted a program the Illinois State Police has that shares information about these incidents. He went on to share additional comments.

As far as the comprehensive mental health approach on the website, which focuses on students, Ms. Hahn inquired if there is the same approach for staff. Mrs. Dubravec replied that this piece would be with Dr. Renee Zoladz, Director of Human Resources, and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that is available. She went on to share an anecdote as well.

Ms. Albrecht inquired if this topic has been discussed with the consortium as well as how New Trier benchmarks with how everyone else is doing. Dr. Sally replied that he is part of a superintendents' consortium of seven schools around the country, while the principals participate in one specific to them. Dr. Sally shared that it is discussed and there are some differences depending on their communities in terms of how they approach it. He noted that this informs the District for its continual improvement though the District needs to listen to all kinds of places and decide what is best for it. Ms. Albrecht inquired if this was a topic for one of the meetings, Dr. Sally replied that while a comprehensive presentation from each school has not taken place, it is a consistent conversation amongst the superintendents.

### **C. Facilities Update: Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic**

Dr. Johnson provided an update on the Winnetka Campus East Side Academic and Athletic Project (ESAA). He shared pictures and details of the construction progress. Significant progress has occurred again over the past month. Many different trades are on-site daily with over 100 construction personnel working on the project. One detail he shared is that the old "NT" logo from the Gates Gym floor was preserved and will be installed in the new Athletics and Kinetic Wellness office. It is a way to recognize the school's past; there will also be a display installed separately about the Gates Gym. Dr. Johnson also shared that the benches in the field house picture that he displayed are made from reclaimed wood from the Gates Gym.

Mr. Dronen invited the elected village leaders from Winnetka for a tour of the new space. They were impressed with what the facility will bring to students and the community.

The project will be substantially complete by July 1<sup>st</sup>. Two air handling units have been delayed, but a temporary one has been installed to complete the flooring work. There is always a possibility that something unexpected could happen, but right now, everything looks as good as it can be at this stage of the project.

The District continues to monitor the budget and work to clear change orders. Dr. Johnson noted that these change orders are reviewed carefully with \$251,000 in orders presented. Future projected change orders have decreased. Dr. Johnson invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Hahn asked about another tour and Dr. Johnson replied that he will arrange one for the following week.

Mr. Dronen shared about his tour with the village leaders, noting many comments that he heard were about the exterior and how it blends in better with the community such as with the removal of the smokestack. He also shared that the natural light coming through the building is extremely impressive. Mr. Dronen noted that some of the leaders went to New Trier and were speaking about how the building used to be compared to now.

## **VII. Administrative Items**

### **A. Treasurer's Report for March 2023**

Dr. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for March 2023. There have been significant tax receipts and the District is catching up to last year. The balance is mostly being kept in cash as the District prepares for a possible delay in summer tax receipts. Though funds are being kept in cash, the District is earning about 5% on it. It is also looking at a short-term investment strategy so there will be layered maturities between now and December 31<sup>st</sup>. The weighted portfolio yield is rising for short term at 4.64%. The total fund balance for all accounts is \$130,761,247.

### **B. Financial Report for March 2023**

Dr. Johnson presented the Financial Report for March 2023. Operating revenue was \$94,372,408 for the first nine months of the fiscal year, or about 20% lower compared to last year. Other local revenue will likely continue a positive variance, driven primarily by interest earnings and CPPRT. The adopted budget for operating revenue is 1.13% lower than last year. The District received, in April, an additional \$27 million in tax receipts which will be reflected on next month's report.

Operating expenditures were \$90,697,000 through March, or 11% higher than last year. Excluding the interfund transfers, the expenses are 4.68% higher than last year while the adopted budget for operating expenditures is 3.52%, so there is some variance. The District is monitoring inflation trends carefully along with seeing more normal spending patterns post-Covid, so it is looking to close the year as on budget as possible while hopefully exceeding the revenue budget. All of this is also being discussed with the Finance Committee. Dr. Johnson invited questions and comments from the Board.

Ms. Tomlinson inquired about the support services for administrators in the education fund on the expense side, noting it was up \$1.2 million. Dr. Johnson explained it is a function and encompasses several items. After further discussion, Dr. Johnson said he would speak with Mr. Spiwak, Director of Business Services, about any variance. Ms. Albrecht also shared that it is a footnoted item as well. Dr. Johnson confirmed this, noting it is due to timing and volume of technology maintenance contracts. He noted that the administrator portion of the title is misleading as it includes items that support students and teachers throughout the school.

### **VIII. Consent Agenda**

- Bill List for the Period, March 1 - 31, 2023
- Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Leave of Absence, Resignations, Retirement, Scale V Movement, Stipends - Separation, and Termination)

Mr. Dronen inquired if any members wanted to pull an item off the Consent Agenda, no one chose to do so. Ms. Albrecht moved that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, which includes: Bill List for the Period, March 1 - 31, 2023 and the Personnel Report (Appointments, Changes of Status, Leave of Absence, Resignations, Retirement, Scale V Movement, Stipends – Separation, and Termination). Mr. Das seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the members voted as follows:

AYE: Mr. McLane, Ms. Tomlinson, Ms. Albrecht, Ms. Alcantara, Mr. Das, Ms. Hahn, Mr. Dronen

NAY: none

The motion passed.

### **IX. Board Member Reports**

Ms. Tomlinson was unable to attend the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **New Trier Fine Arts Association (NTFAA)** as she was in an all-day negotiating session.

Ms. Alcantara attended the **New Trier Parents Association (NTPA)** meeting on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Class co-chairs gave grade level update reports. They also revealed the theme for the senior class graduation party. Mr. Pavely attended and explained his role as well as answered questions from the group. Dr. Sally also attended and presented on attendance.

Ms. Alcantara shared that the **Community Engagement Committee** will meet on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Ms. Alcantara shared that the **Policy Committee** will meet on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. McLane reported additional details from the **Facilities Steering Committee**. Summer 2023 work is moving along with Duke Childs storm management work beginning in the near future. He also shared his appreciation for Dr. Johnson's 15-year plan and continuing to move that forward.

Ms. Hahn shared that the **Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee (IGCC)** met in Wilmette on March 9<sup>th</sup>. She, Dr. Sally and Mr. Dronen attended as representatives from New Trier. Other representatives included those from Wilmette schools, library, park district and village board as well as area mental health and social services providers. The group plans to meet an additional three times throughout the year in an effort to understand the challenges facing each stakeholder, along with identifying, improving and facilitating access to the available and appropriate supports



in the community. The group will also brainstorm some of the underlying causes of the current crisis in the hope of improving outcomes for all residents. Ms. Hahn looks forward to this work and is proud that New Trier is going to play a part in it.

Ms. Hahn also shared about the **New Trier Educational Foundation (NTEF)** has several events coming up. This Saturday is their Day of Service where New Trier students and alumni from around the world work together on services projects in their hometowns and build connections with fellow Trevians. Pitch Night is May 11<sup>th</sup> where students in the business entrepreneurship class participate in a Shark Tank-like competition presenting their ideas before a panel of judges. May 19<sup>th</sup> is the WNTH spring banquet that honors participants in the broadcasting and radio programs. Finally, nominations for the Alumni Hall of Honor will be accepted until May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Das did not have a report for the **Booster Club** as they are meeting on April 18th.

Mr. Das did not have a report for the **TrueNorth Leadership Council** as they are meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

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

Dr. Sally highlighted the following events:

- Wednesday is a testing day for Freshmen. State testing took place last week at the Winnetka campus.
- The spring orchestra concert is on Thursday.
- The next Board Meeting is May 15<sup>th</sup> where the Board will say goodbye to Ms. Albrecht and Mr. McLane and welcome new members, Ms. Courtney McDonough and Ms. Sally Pofcher.

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

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Lindsey Ruston, Secretary

---

Keith Dronen, President