

**Board Notes**  
January 27, 2025

The regular meeting of the School Board was held at 6:00 p.m., Monday, January 27, 2025, at New Prairie United School Corporation Central Office Board Room with Mr. Phil King, Mrs. Jill Smith, Mr. Rich Gadacz and Mr. Rich Shail present. Dr. Paul White, Superintendent, was also present.

Mr. Jason DeMeyer was absent.

Mr. Phil King, Board President, reviewed guidelines for speaking on agenda items.

There was a motion by Mr. Shail, seconded by Mr. Gadacz and approved 4-0-1.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

The Board approved Consent Items as follows:

- (A) Minutes – December 16, 2024, January 6, 2025, January 14, 2025
- (B) Financial Reports
- (C) Claims
- (D) Payroll
- (E) Personnel Report as follows:

**CERTIFIED**

▪ **Leaves/Resignations/Retirements**

1. Wendi Hemphill – Retirement as Prairie View Elementary School Title 1 Teacher effective 6/30/2025

▪ **Employment**

▪ **Employment – Extra-Curricular & Ancillary Duties**

1. Garrett Curless – NPMS 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Assistant Girls Basketball Coach beginning 2024-2025 school year
2. Jennifer Soos – NPHS Homebound Instructor for a NPHS Student for the remainder of 2025
3. Barb Papai – Olive Twp. Elementary New Teacher Mentor for 2024-2025

▪ **Adjustments**

1. Catherine Saylor, Elementary Art Teacher, to receive a stipend of \$2,500 for Semester 1, 2024-2025 role as High Ability Coordinator to be paid out of the High Ability Grant.
2. Barb Papai, current position title of High Ability Coordinator to change position title to Olive Twp. Elementary Academic Interventionist beginning 8/5/2021.

**CLASSIFIED**

▪ **Leaves/Resignations/Retirement**

1. Joyce Collins – Retirement as NPUSC Nutritional Services Purchasing Coordinator effective 6/6/2025
2. Diane Molnar – Retirement as NPUSC Bus Driver effective 1/10/2025
3. Brenda Gorny – Retirement as NPUSC Bus Driver effective 1/1/2025
4. Brenda Tabaka – Resignation as NPUSC Bus Aide effective 1/15/2025
5. Jamie Lawrence – Resignation as RPES Instructional Assistant effective 1/23/2025

▪ **Employment**

1. Steven Kuntz – NPUSC Nutritional Services Courier Part-Time start date 1/7/2025
2. Jenna Davis – NPMS Nutritional Services Worker Full-Time start date 1/7/2025
3. Brianna Patrizi – Rolling Prairie Elementary School Instructional Assistant start date pending criminal background check results
4. Paige Norris – Rolling Prairie Elementary School Library Aide start date pending criminal background check results

▪ **Employment – Extra-Curricular**

1. Derek Hicks – NPHS Head Varsity Softball Coach for the 2024-2025 school year
2. Scott Meredith – NPHS Assistant Varsity Softball Coach for the 2024-2025 school year  
Shaunna Tewell - NPHS Head JV Softball Coach for the 2024-2025 school year

▪ **Adjustments**

## REPORTS

### Superintendent's Report

- Dr. White welcomed everyone present and online watching via [YouTube.com/@npuscboardmeetings](https://www.youtube.com/@npuscboardmeetings). Dr. White explained that the schools are beginning preparations for the next school year. He reminded everyone that if there are updates to demographics, specifically address changes and documentations needed to be on file for your students, make sure that information is submitted as soon as possible. Transfer student renewal will begin with the yearly updated Transfer Student Form that will be available online at the npusc.k12.in.us website February 1, 2025 for the 2025-2026 school year. This process must be completed yearly for those students at every grade level coming into the schools from out-of-district. Dr. White added that NPUSC will be hosting a Kindergarten Registration Parent Night at every elementary school on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 5:00 pm CST. The families with a 5-year-old by August 1<sup>st</sup> have the opportunity to come into any of the schools that evening to receive more information to prepare for the process to attend Kindergarten.
- Dr. White went on to highlight that at next month's Board Meeting, February 24, 2025, at the High School in the Cafeteria Annex, there will be a presentation from Counselors and Administration regarding the new graduation requirements that are coming for the class of 2029 as they come in as freshman next year. He went on that these are the biggest changes he has seen in his career in the State of Indiana. There are a lot of exciting components to these changes. There will also be an informational night on February 20<sup>th</sup> for current 8<sup>th</sup> grade families. This will be an in-depth look at courses and registration for courses for 9<sup>th</sup> graders based on changes that are beginning next school year.
- Dr. White concluded his report stating that winter sports are in their final phases of their season. Girls Basketball will be in Sectional action next Tuesday night. Girls Wrestling was involved in the State Tournament with girls achieving success in that new program. Boys Wrestling State Tournament is beginning following a very successful season and looking forward to their run at State.

## ACTION ITEMS

- (A) The Board accepted the following donations:
  - New Prairie High School Swim Team received a donation of a new American Flag for the pool deck from the Dombkowski Family
  - New Prairie High School Robotics Team received the following donations:
    - a \$5000 grant from Cleveland Cliffs
    - Sponsorship donation from DA Dodd \$500
    - Sponsorship donation from Reuer \$1000
    - Sponsorship donation from Lawnscape \$150
    - Sponsorship donation from Kirby Risk \$1000
    - Sponsorship donation from Fiber Bond Operating LLC \$250
    - Sponsorship donation from J&J Industrial Service \$500
  - NPUSC Nutritional Services Angel Fund received a donation of \$712 from Delta Theta Tau Sorority of New Carlisle
  - Rolling Prairie received over \$700 from Fund Drive Donors for student needs:
    - Rolling Prairie Business and Community Association
    - Saugany Lake Conservation Club
    - Individual Donors
- (B) The Board accepted Conflict of Interest Statements
- (C) The Board approved voiding old checks
- (D) The Board approved Tim Scott's updated Administrative Contract
- (E) The Board approved the Network-Attached Storage (NAS) Quote for NPUSC Camera Systems
- (F) The Board approved Overnight Field Trip Requests
- (G) The Board approved 2025 Summer Remediation and HFL Summer Camps
- (H) The Board approved the Resolution Opposing Indiana House Bills 1136 and 1501

\*Mr. King commented on record prior to the Board Vote speaking on behalf of himself on his opposition of Indiana House Bills 1136 and 1501 as follows:

Mr. King began by explaining that the resolution that is being recommended that the board approves tonight are two local school districts that would be affected if HB 1136 and HB 1501

would pass - those being Tri-Township Consolidated Schools right here in LaPorte County and Gary Community Schools. In addition to those two, the following three districts would also fall victim to these bills if passed - Cannelton City Schools in Perry County, Union Schools just SE of Muncie and the biggest of all - Indianapolis Public Schools, with over 50 schools that could be affected.

This once again is a prime example of the Indiana Lawmakers overstepping their authority as elected officials. They have a personal agenda and part of that agenda is to abolish public schools in Indiana as we know it. They will say that Charter schools are public schools as well; however, they are run by for-profit businesses that if they are not profitable - they will close the school - including in the middle of a school year - then what, what will those families, and more importantly, those students, do then? Charter Schools are not held to the same standards as public schools and the education quality, in most cases, does not come close to that of public schools.

This attack on public schools started back in the Mitch Danielson era back in 2011 where he introduced letter grades for schools followed by the passing of HB 1003 in 2013 by the General Assembly. Charter schools were just starting to really show their ugly heads and school vouchers were introduced. The idea - Public schools were failing our students and charter schools were the better choice. The plan - give schools grades based on how students did on standardized testing. The result - public schools, in general, continued to outperform charter schools but of course this was due to the data not being analyzed correctly, so they fixed "issues", changed the ways schools' grades were given and Charter school grades went up. The following year, the same thing happened and continued to happen for the most part until letter grades slowly faded away.

I would say to these public servants to look at the health care system throughout the US. Ever since public non-for-profit hospitals went away making room for for-profit hospitals health care has been in shambles. Hospitals no longer treat everyone - no matter their ability to pay - they now refuse patients and close down under-performing areas of the hospital - if not the whole hospital - if it is hurting their bottom line. The same thing will happen to our schools if this piece of crap legislation gets voted on and passes.

And this is just the beginning - as of now the bill states that if more than 50% of students residing within a school district's boundaries were in enrolled in schools not operated by the district as of Oct 1 of the previous year, the school must be dissolved - what did they think would happen when they expanded the voucher program? And where will it stop? Now it's 50% - and when it backfires on them and they don't see as many districts hitting that 50% mark, it'll be introduced that the right size number should be 40%... then 30%... then 20% - then what, one student?... where does it stop?

This bill will take away local control of schools and as a result disband the public-school board - people who do not live in our communities and will be in charge of running our schools... Public schools belong to the public. I highly encourage members of our communities to reach out to our local legislatures and tell them if this bill goes up for vote, to vote NO. This would include Representative Pressel, Senator Bohacek and the author of this God-awful bill, Representative Teshka.

If passed - a copy of this resolution will be posted to our website under the School Board tab along with contact emails and phone numbers to each of these legislatures. We will also post something to the district Facebook page as well.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- (A) 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Revised Board Policy 8500.02 - Food Services, Meal Charging and Uncollectible Debt  
There was no discussion by the Board on this updated policy.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

- Mr. King reminded everyone to contact their legislators regarding the two **House Bills, 1136 and 1501**, he just spoke on urging them to vote **"NO"**.
- Mr. King then asked everyone to contact the Senate Educational Committee Chair, Mr. Jeff Raatz, to consider and vote **"YES"** on **Senate Bills 320 and 403**, in the Senate. These bills will increase

oversight and accountability on voucher receiving private schools and charter schools. The Bills state that if private and charter schools are going to receive public dollars then they should have to play by the same rules as public schools. To contact Senator Jeff Raatz, email him at [S27@iga.in.gov](mailto:S27@iga.in.gov) or call his office at 317-233-0930.

- Mr. King reminded everyone that the next regular Board Meeting will be February 24, 2025 at the High School in the Cafeteria Annex. Mr. King also reminded everyone of the important informational presentation by the high school team that evening.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. King asked if the Board had any further business. The Board had no further business to discuss. The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.