



Neil Wetherbee, Superintendent
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Regular Meeting Minutes February 10, 2025 NPS Board of Education

Board President, Ben Purdy, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
This meeting was held at 104 S Wing St. Northport, MI in room 300.

Roll Call

Members Present: Tom Wetherbee, Ryan Blessing, Ben Purdy, Danielle Percy, and Jamie Scripps

Members Absent: Jake Zimmer and Dan Duffiney

A quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Moved by Dan Duffiney, supported by Danielle Percy, to approve the agenda at this February 10, 2025, regular board meeting.

All Ayes

Motion Carried 5-0

Students of the Month

- Elementary: Brianna Ugalde, presented by Alex Post
- Secondary: Desiree Wetherbee, presented by Carrie Wadas

Superintendent's Report

- Enrollment at NPS is currently at its lower end of fluctuation. Superintendent Wetherbee discussed the myriad ways in which he works to increase our numbers, with a goal of 234 students. This averages 18 students per grade and would allow us to bring back Wildcat athletics and offer more extracurricular activities. He presented a student interest survey whose results indicated that there was not enough interest in many of the options to make them a reality. Our current student population of 127 makes it nearly impossible to field enough students consistently for our own teams.
- Our Kindergarten teacher resigned, and Tracy Denoyer has filled the position. Tracy is doing a phenomenal job. We have a vacancy in the front office and will be posting the position soon.

Public Comments

- Laura Cavendish gave an update on the PTO. PTO bylaws are on the agenda to be discussed tonight. The PTO is working with Rebecca Teahen to have a Northport Promise presentation at the next meeting. The middle school dance was successful with about twenty participants. A big thank you to the kitchen and maintenance staff for their extra efforts. Upcoming PTO activities include a cooking class night on March 14, and a clothing swap in April.

- Eric Potes presented a letter to the Board detailing his concerns regarding athletics and after-school activities at Northport.
- TaShena Sams supported the idea of more after school activities and asked about a safety issue from a recent away game.
- Ben Hale noted that he was happy with where the school is headed academically and hopes to find a way to make Wildcat sports work.

Consent Agenda

- Approval of January 13, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- Approval of January 13, 2025, Organizational Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Bills Presented for Payment for \$148,774.14

Hearing no objections, these items were approved by consent.

Action Items

Approval of the Agreement for Summer Collection of School Property Taxes

MOTION: Moved by Tom Wetherbee, seconded by Danielle Percy, that the Northport Board of Education approve the Agreement for Summer Collection of School Property Taxes for 2025.

DISCUSSION: NONE

All Ayes

Motion Carried 5-0

Discussion Items

Academic Data Review

Superintendent Wetherbee reviewed NWEA data on growth from fall to winter this year compared to last year. We are improving in every area except language arts. We are showing higher levels of growth than expected, based on school demographics, in every subject area.

Community Radio

Superintendent Wetherbee discussed creating a school community radio station. Mike Ryan, who is retiring to his home in Northport, formerly worked for ESPN and has approached us to help create this program. Beaver Island School has a station, “The Voice of Beaver Island,” and we could use that model. There is an organization call the High School Radio Project that could also help get the program started. There are many options, but estimated costs would be approximately \$18,000 for start-up and about \$6,000 annually to maintain. Board members expressed support for this idea and have no reservations about moving forward.

PTO Bylaws

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) President, Laura Cavendish, presented the PTO Bylaws and Mission Statement for the Board’s review. She thanked Jamie Scripps for her assistance in the process. She noted that that are working on a draft budget.

Old Business

NONE

New Business

NONE

Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Wetherbee reviewed the data that details the difficulties of fielding Wildcat-only teams. He noted his own devotion to bringing back non-co-op sports given his and his family's history of playing in blue & gold.

Public Comments

- Ben Hale thanked Superintendent Wetherbee for his efforts and asked about the number of players needed for various teams.
- Laura Cavendish appreciated the presentation regarding sports. She noted that she would like to see community radio as a class offering, rather than a club, so it didn't interfere with other after-school activities. She stated that she wants the PTO to be involved with spreading the word about all the great things happening at Northport Public School.
- Eric Potes thanked Neil and noted that there are a lot of good things happening here. He expressed that we are all in this together and wanting the best for our children. He stated that he believes that our security cameras are good enough and that the doors should be left unlocked for several hours after school ends and questioned whether the pickleball players should continue to have everyday access to the courts if they are not using them consistently.
- Matt Dignan, 6th grade boys' basketball coach, questioned how long Suttons Bay would want to keep us as a part of the co-op and stated that half to three quarters of his teams wouldn't play if the co-op was the only option. He noted that he is fully willing to help in whatever way is needed.
- Lakota Raphael, elementary girls' soccer coach, stated that he understands both sides of this dilemma and that we just don't have the numbers for teams. He also voiced support for the community radio idea.

Board Member Comments

Ben Purdy asked to add the creation of an athletics committee to the March agenda as a discussion item. He also requested an athletics section in the newsletter.

Ryan Blessing thanked all the parents for their involvement.

Jamie Scripps thanks Laura Cavendish and Melissa Hale for their work with the PTO.

Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Ryan Blessing, seconded by Danielle Percy, to adjourn.

Motion Passed 5-0

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Danielle Percy, Secretary

Elizabeth Schwind, Recording Secretary