



Neil Wetherbee, Superintendent  
Northport Public School  
104 S. Wing St. Northport, MI 49670  
p. (231) 386-5153 f. (231) 386-9838  
[www.northportps.org](http://www.northportps.org)

## Regular Meeting Minutes NPS Board of Education

**Date:** September 8, 2025

**Time:** 5:30 P.M.

**Location:** Room 300, Northport Public School

### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by the Board President at 5:30 P.M.

### **II. Roll Call**

Members Present: Ryan Blessing, Ben Purdy, Jamie Scripps, Danielle Percy, Tom Wetherbee, Dan Duffiney, and Benjamin Hale

Members Absent: None

A quorum was present.

### **III. Approval of Agenda**

Motion: Moved by Ryan Blessing, supported by Danielle Percy, to approve the agenda at the September 8, 2025, regular board meeting.

Vote: 7-0. Motion carried.

### **IV. Superintendent's Report**

The Superintendent highlighted progress on three focus areas identified in last year's evaluation:

1. Housing – Discussed attainable housing options, including potential land donations. Reviewed district land ownership history and noted that existing property is not feasible for housing. Housing remains the largest issue facing the school.

2. Extra-Curriculars – Summer golf club was successful. Wildcat Middle School Cross Country has five runners. LIFT discussions continue with partner districts; Suttons Bay donates a room, Leland contributes \$40,000 in passthrough funds, and Glen Lake contributes \$41,000 from its general fund. Radio collaboration has 16 students enrolled and is partnering with the Michigan Association of Broadcasters.

3. Community Relations – Hiring a new Assistant Office Manager with a journalism/marketing background. Later agenda discussion will include market research to support enrollment growth and community engagement.

## **V. Public Comments**

- Laura Cavendish – Noted her daughter was the only girl in the summer golf group and hoped for more participation. As PTO President, announced a new teacher assistance form on the website and upcoming PTO events: Homecoming floats and bonfire, middle school dance, Halloween trunk-or-treat with haunted trail, and Walk to School Day (Oct. 8) with Lions Club support. Expressed parent concerns about LIFT after-school space and the abruptness of a staff member.
- Kali Dignan – Urged serious consideration of LIFT funding. Suggested a sports committee and better communication to boost participation.
- Eric Potes – Shared enrollment trends showing decline since 2003. Praised potential for Chess Club. Advocated support for Dandelion Discovery Center, family follow-up when students leave, and adoption of formal exit guidelines. Emphasized need for bold changes to address enrollment.

## **VI. Consent Agenda**

- Approval of August 11, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
  - Approval of bills presented for payment in the amount of \$193,606.40
  - Approval of the hire of Elizabeth Wadas as Assistant Office Manager
- Hearing no objections, approved by consent.

## **VII. Action Items**

None

## **VIII. Discussion Items**

a. Board Member Appointment Process – Board discussed improving transparency and consistency for filling mid-term vacancies. Suggestions included:

- Advance notice of resignation to allow agenda preparation
- Broader advertising of openings (website, Facebook, newspaper)
- Maintaining an ongoing list of interested candidates
- Policy development to codify the process

Jamie Scripps will draft a policy resolution/amendment for the October meeting.

b. Market Research – Superintendent reviewed potential firms to conduct market research for enrollment growth and public perception.

- Prose – Small, personalized, one-time plan
- Hanover Research – Large firm, broad expertise, annual contract

Estimated costs: \$50,000–\$75,000 per year. Board requested client testimonials and further review.

## **IX. Old Business**

None

## **X. New Business**

None

## **XII. Superintendent's Comments**

None

### **XIII. Public Comments**

- Karen Trolenberg – Announced training for Invention Convention; NPS has a dedicated STEM Lab and afterschool Science Club.
- Laura Cavendish – Supported multiple ways to publicize board vacancies.
- Carrie Wadas – Praised staff dedication and positive culture at NPS.
- Erin Connolly – Supported personal outreach for board vacancies; encouraged examining kindergarten enrollment and celebrated strong teacher communication.
- Eric Potes – Suggested using the website to advertise board vacancies; raised concerns about cost of market surveys, urged family outreach, and advocated support for Dandelion Discovery Center.
- Karen Trolenberg – Questioned value of costly surveys but acknowledged potential benefits of unbiased research.
- Kali Dignan – Urged listening to parents instead of spending heavily on surveys.
- Erin Connolly – Recommended looking into GSRP funding for preschool.

### **XIV. Board Member Comments**

- Tom Wetherbee – Noted student enrollment discussions are ongoing and exit surveys have been conducted previously.
- Ben Hale – Suggested recording and publishing meetings and presentations. Recommended forming an athletics committee to expand programming, improve communication, and recognize student achievements. Asked about mentoring program continuation (confirmed by administration).
- Ryan Blessing – Observed that parents sometimes take NPS benefits for granted, and student departures contribute to challenges.

### **XV. Adjournment**

Motion: Moved by Ryan Blessing, supported by Danielle Percy, to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: 7–0. Motion carried.

Time: 6:46 P.M.

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Danielle Percy, Secretary

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Elizabeth Schwind, Recording Secretary