



Neil Wetherbee, Superintendent

Northport Public School
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Regular Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2024

NPS Board of Education

Board President, Ben Purdy, called the meeting to order at 5:40 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, Jake Zimmer, Danielle Percy, Dr. Barbara Conley, and Dan Duffiney

Members Absent: NONE

A quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Moved by Dr. Barbara Conley, supported by Ryan Blessing, to approve the agenda at this January 8, 2024, regular board meeting.

All Ayes

Motion Carried 7-0

Board Appreciation Month

January is Board Member Appreciation Month. On behalf of Northport Public School administration and staff, Recording Secretary Elizabeth Schwind expressed sincere gratitude to Board Members for their dedicated service over the last year.

Superintendent's Report

- January's Student of the Month will be recognized at next month's meeting.
- This year's school budget has a surplus of approximately \$500,000 built in. We have utilized some of those funds to hire an additional Special Education teacher, but there is still a sizable amount left.
- In addition to the general budget surplus, we have an additional \$40,000 in the professional development budget that has not been allocated. So far, approximately two thirds of teachers have signed up for a conference for professional development. Teachers are returning with valuable knowledge and sharing with their colleagues. If the Board has no objections, we will offer teachers a second opportunity for a conference, with strict criteria

for approval. Board members expressed support for this use of funds after inquiring about the length of conferences, success/efficacy of learning, and per diem rates.

- NPS contracts with Northwest Education Services ISD for our business services. Our contract with them specifically excludes human resource services. The ISD does not currently offer HR services, though they are considering it for the future. In the meantime, there is software (LINQ) that other area districts use that can help facilitate the hiring process and digitalize document submissions. The site license is \$2,000 per year and would save significant time and potential errors. Board members expressed support for this purchase.
- The school needs some additional furniture to outfit the mental health specialist's room and to update the student area outside the main office. For the new items to match, we would need to go through the same company (Interphase) that furnished the school five years ago. Interphase has estimated the total cost to be around \$22,000. This amount is below the threshold to mandate a competitive bid process.

MOTION FROM THE FLOOR: Moved by Dr. Barbara Conley, seconded by Jake Zimmer, that the Northport Board of Education approve the purchase of furniture from Interphase, with a cost not to exceed \$24,000.

DISCUSSION: Members expressed support for the new furniture, but concern about cost. Superintendent Wetherbee noted that when Interphase won the competitive bid five years ago, they were far and away the most economical option.

All Ayes

Motion Carried 7-0

- Many Northport students report graduating and not being prepared for the outside world. Increasing academic rigor has a few outcomes, including families being upset, students not being able to complete credits, and students choosing to switch districts. What is the best way to raise expectations to adequately prepare students, while minimizing those negative outcomes? This is the start of a larger conversation for the Board to consider. Board members discussed potential causes of these difficulties and possible solutions.

Public Comments

NONE

Consent Agenda

- Approval of December 11, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Bills Presented for Payment for \$111,143.08
- Approval the Hiring of Nicholas Jeffrey as Special Education Teacher

Hearing no objections, these items were approved by consent.

Action Items

Boiler Project Design Proposal

MOTION: Moved by Dr. Barbara Conley, seconded by Tom Wetherbee, that the Northport Board of Education accept the proposal, submitted by Nealis Engineering, Inc. to provide professional mechanical and electrical engineering design services for replacing two (2) existing hot water heating boilers.

DISCUSSION: This is the next step in the boiler replacement process, according to area experts. We do not have staff that has expertise in this type of project, so we will need support for the planning and bid selection process. Board members discussed the benefits of having a design engineer and concerns over the cost. Tom Wetherbee noted that these types of things tend to save money in the long run.

All Ayes

Motion Carried 7-0

Discussion Items

Board Policy Updates

- po0122 (Revised)
- po1420 (Revised)
- po3120 (Reissued)
- po3130 (Reviewed)
- po3131 (Revised)
- po3132 (Reviewed)
- po3139 (Reissued)
- po3140 (Reviewed)
- po3142 (Revised)
- po3220 (Revised)

Board Policy is how our school complies with State and Federal law. The bulk of these updates are to comply with new State laws regarding collective bargaining. Other small changes are updating to gender neutral language.

MOTION FROM THE FLOOR: Moved by Dr. Barbara Conley to adopt the policy changes as presented. Motion died for lack of a second.

Old Business

NONE

New Business

NONE

Superintendent's Comments

NONE

Public Comments

NONE

Board Member Comments

NONE

Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Dr. Barbara Conley, seconded by Ryan Blessing, to adjourn.

Motion Passed 7-0

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Danielle Percy, Secretary

Elizabeth Schwind, Recording Secretary