Minutes of Special Call Meeting of the Board of Education

The Board of Trustees
Northville Public Schools

A Special Call Meeting of the Board of Education of the Board of Trustees of Northville Public Schools was held Tuesday, April 7, 2020, beginning at 6:30 PM in the Virtual Meeting.

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Treasure Jankowski at 6:32 p.m.

2. Roll Call

| Mr. Matthew Wilk, President (arrived at 6:45 p.m. due to Zoom capacity issues) | Ms. Mary Kay Gallagher, Superintendent |
| Mr. Roland Hwang, Vice President | Mr. Mike Zopf, Asst. Supt. for Finance & Operations |
| Ms. Laurie Doner, Secretary | Mr. Dave Rodgers, Asst. Supt. for Human Resources |
| Ms. Cynthia Jankowski, Treasurer | Mr. Aaron Baughman, Asst. Supt. for Instructional Services |
| Ms. Angela Jaafar, Trustee | Ms. Beth Santer, Director of Special Services |
| Ms. Suzanne Lynn, Trustee | |
| Ms. Sarah Prescott, Trustee | |

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Treasurer Jankowski led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Motion No. 19/20-113 by Vice President Hwang, supported by Trustee Prescott, that the agenda be adopted as presented. Roll Call Vote: Hwang – yes; Jaafar – yes; Jankowski – yes; Lynn – yes; Prescott – yes; Wilk – absent; Doner – yes. Motion carried 6-0.

5. Consent Resolutions

Motion No. 19/20-114 by Vice President Hwang, supported by Trustee Prescott,
that the Board accept the consent agenda items for approval as presented:

a) Minutes of the March 31, 2020 Virtual Meeting of the Board of Education

     Roll Call Vote: Jaafar – yes; Jankowski – yes; Lynn – yes; Prescott – yes; Wilk – absent; Doner – yes; Hwang – yes. Motion carried 6-0.

6. Communications

The email communications received at npsboe@northvilleschools.org received today were added to the communications for Board awareness.

7. Superintendent’s Report/Update

a) School Closure / COVID-19 Update

     Superintendent Gallagher shared words of thanks and appreciation to our families, staff, and community for adapting to the tremendous changes occurring rapidly during this unprecedented time. She gave an overview of the timeline regarding the Governor’s initial closure of schools and the Executive Order last week extending the closure for the balance of the school year.

     Superintendent Gallagher suggested the Public Comment be moved until after the Distance Learning Plan / Continuity of Learning plan discussion.

8. NPS Distance Learning / Continuity of Learning/COVID-19 Response Plan Application –Discussion

     Superintendent Gallagher provided an overview on the Board direction on March 31, 2020 to develop and implement online instruction beginning on April 13, 2020. The plan will be submitted to Wayne RESA as required and NPS intends to submit on April 9, 2020.

     Ms. Pek shared slides regarding the Core Principles / Schedules under consideration. A Distance Learning example for Elementary, Middle School and High School were reviewed.

     Mr. Baughman explained the process the district has undergone through different phases to implement distance learning. The district has been working on the plan since before the initial closure and as the closure evolves, the plan has as well, and we are now at a place where a Distance Learning Plan which is more robust than what is currently in place is drafted and the district is prepared to submit to Wayne RESA for approval as required.

     Teachers were asked to complete a Technology Survey and there was good participation. The district is offering Professional Development to staff to help get
those teachers not as tech savvy ready to go to implement the Distance Learning plan.

Mr. Baughman noted the Executive Order requires Do No Harm for students and our teachers are prepared to help students who may not have been on track before the closure to get on track. There will be 3rd quarter grades and there will opportunity to improve the grade with making up missing work, etc. There will be 4th quarter grades. Superintendent Gallagher said there may be options for credit or pass/fail based on direction from Executive Order.

Ms. Santer shared how Special Services will be integrated into the plan and the district intends to stick to the spirit of FAPE. The services provided may require grouping students in different buildings. NPS is thinking outside the box and there are a lot of great ideas to get services to our students.

Mr. Rodgers described some staffing and support considerations. There is a need to be flexible and possibly redeploy staff. There is an understanding that each staff member may be facing unique issues during this pandemic and that is certainly something to keep in mind.

Superintendent Gallagher noted the most important piece is teacher access. The administration is still grappling with the schedule in terms of time, there needs to be a careful balance. This is less time than a school day, but still more than some of the suggested models.

Each Board member weighed in on the plan which they were provided tonight. Due to the time constraints, there wasn’t the opportunity to get this to the Board in advance of the meeting.

All Board members expressed thanks and appreciation for the work of COLT and our administrators to put this together quickly.

Vice President Hwang asked about the platforms which will be used for the distance learning plan. Will teachers be able to chat with students and can the lessons be recorded for students to rewatch?

Mr. Baughman noted Google Classroom is the main one with a few others. A Zoom license is in place for the staff and recording is possible.

Trustee Prescott has three big rocks. Graduating seniors, starting the school year early or not, and teacher evaluation which can be tabled for now. Grading is another topic. Likes the idea of teachers collaborating and co-teaching where possible and then rolling out content to a whole grade perhaps.

Trustee Jaafar appreciates the comprehensive draft. Wondering about graduating seniors and what can be done for them. Would like more clarification on grading.
Suggested MiStar may be a valuable resource / platform. When does instruction count?

Secretary Doner noted flexibility is key. We also need to keep in mind the social / emotional wellbeing of our students. The survey for staff was great. Suggested going slow with the rollout on April 13th so there is understanding for all our stakeholders.

Trustee Lynn said bringing together flexibility with schedules and balancing some level of consistency is key.

Treasurer Jankowski said we are all getting used to this new normal. It is hard for all of us. This plan is a good framework.

President Wilk noted since the closure is long term, the district needs to step in and do something. The kids have done little to nothing for weeks and it cannot continue and be treated like a long snow day. This draft is a good start and we can always revise or tweak it as we implement.

9. Public Comments

Mr. Tom Silak, NEA President, shared some of the EA’s concerns regarding the plan. He noted education of all students is important and the teachers want to meet the required expectations. The plan as created is not consistent with other plans or those recommended by experts in the field.

He stated the time and content in this plan is too much and not achievable for our staff or our families. This plan is way out of line with what the majority of other districts are doing. Mr. Silak asked for the administration to allow more flexibility and allow educators to make decisions regarding the distance learning plan. He noted the synchronous instruction is less desirable to staff.

Mr. Silak shared there has never been another issue in his tenure as an educator that has caused more anxiety or fear amongst his peers.

Ms. Prescott asked if the critiques of plan are the same amongst all grades or is age not a factor. Mr. Silak indicated there seems to be more concern for staff of younger learners, but the concerns of the secondary staff are just different. In summary there are concerns across the Board, they just may be different concerns.

Vice President Hwang asked if there are plans other districts are using that could be shared. Superintendent Gallagher stated they do have those and she can share them with the board.

There were 27 public comments from both parents and staff regarding the plan. Some common themes were: slow down; more flexibility, plan too rigid; consider
social / emotional health of students and staff; the plan is too much for families to manage; little to no teacher input; plan would be okay if this wasn’t a pandemic; how do working parents implement this; what is plan for kids who don’t participate; please continue plan already in place, that works; synchronous learning is too much; don’t want a bell schedule; need to find a compromise for staff, families, and students.

The main repeating themes were- slow down and flexibility.

Superintendent Gallagher reiterated the Board directive to have a plan developed and implemented by April 13, 2020. She thanked everyone for the feedback and said that although the path isn’t perfect, we are seeking to find balance and it will become clearer as we roll this out. The main intent of plan is more teacher contact.

10. **Staffing Considerations / Extended Closure – ECEEDP**

   Mr. Rodgers and Ms. Simons reviewed a memo regarding implications of K-12 Executive Order School Closure on ECEEDP. An overview of what the ECEEDP program has done since the school closure was provided along with three options for consideration.

   The district is seeking further clarification from the Governor whether the requirement to continue compensation for school employees under the Continuity of Learning plans applies to tuition-based Early Childhood programs.

   There were no questions or concerns regarding the options.

   Trustee Prescott likes the idea of redeploying staff.

11. **Added Agenda Items**

    None.

12. **Public Comments**

    Mr. Jacobs is a Thornton Creek parent and hopes the district continues to pay the ECEEDP staff.

13. **Questions/Comments from Board Members**

    Superintendent Gallagher stated she needs to be clear on direction from Board to move forward and submit the plan on Thursday, or does the Board want to pause.
There was lengthy Board discussion surrounding the timeline for the plan implementation. Some comments included: can the plan roll out be scaffolded with rollout to older kids first; teacher voice is something we have been asking for and we heard a lot tonight, let's back up a bit; appreciate different perspectives but we have enough to submit plan and move forward, we can make revisions down the road.

President Wilk suggested sending feedback regarding plan to Superintendent Gallagher and himself.

Superintendent Gallagher asked the Board to consider another Board of Education meeting to consider any revisions in an open meeting. Also, given the fact that not everyone who desired to attend the meeting tonight was able to do so, it is a good idea.

Board agreed to meet Thursday, April 9th, to discuss any revisions and approve plan before it is submitted to Wayne RESA.

14. **Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

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Laurie Doner, Secretary