



**Minutes of a Regular Meeting, February 4, 2021
Novi Community School District
Board of Education**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Novi Community School District was held on Thursday, February 4, 2021, beginning at 7:03 PM via Zoom.

Present: Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Mena, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy,
and Mrs. Roney

Absent:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Members of the audience joined with the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Mr. Cook and supported by Mrs. Roney that the Novi Board of Education approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy,
and Mrs. Roney (by Roll Call)

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

There were 39 comments from the audience regarding returning to school full-time, in person.

CONSENT AGENDA A ITEMS

Items included in the Consent Items are those which have previously been considered by the Board in committee or at a prior meeting, or of such a routine nature, that discussion is not required. Board members may request that any items be removed from Consent Items for further discussion, if additional information is needed or available.

CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Regular Meeting Minutes of January 21, 2021

- B. Approval of Bills
 - a. Board Report
 - b. Check Register for November 2020
 - c. Purchase Card Report for October 1, 2020 through October 30, 2020

It was moved by Mr. Mena and supported by Mrs. Murphy that the Novi Board of Education approves the consent item(s) as presented.

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy,
and Mrs. Roney (by Roll Call)

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

Personnel Report

Gary Kinzer, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, presents for your consideration the following personnel changes:

A.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	New Hires	
				<u>Rate</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Bronson, George	HS/MS	Health/PE/Computer Teacher	New Hire	BA	02-05-21

B. Retirements and Resignations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Bornowski, Jessica	MS	ELA Teacher	Resigned	06-11-21

A. Leaves of Absence

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
-------------	--------------	-------------------	---------------	------------------

It was moved by Mr. Cook and supported by Mrs. Roney that the Novi Board of Education adopts the personnel report recommendations as presented.

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy, and Mrs. Roney

Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

IB CP Report

Alaina Brown, teacher and IB coordinator at Novi High School, and Sarah Lephart, counselor at Novi High School, would like to propose that Novi High School offer an International Baccalaureate Career Program. In light of the Michigan Department of Education’s Career Readiness initiative and student interest, the addition of this program would complement the existing DP program and give more IB opportunities to all students at the high school.

It was moved by Mrs. Murphy and supported by Mr. Mena that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve the addition of the IB Career Program.

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy, and Mrs. Roney

Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

Bid Package #4: HS-HVAC

On Tuesday, November 24, 2020 and Thursday, December 17, 2020, sealed bids were received and publicly opened for the Novi Middle School additions and remodeling. In attendance for the bid opening were representatives from the Novi Community School District, Plante Moran Cresa, TMP Architecture, McCarthy & Smith, Inc. and interested bidders. Bids were opened, recorded, and tabulated through a Zoom meeting.

The project team conducted post bid interviews with each of the following, qualified bidders, for each bid division of work. During the post bid interview, the project team reviewed the scope of work, project schedule, manpower requirements, and specified materials with each of the contractors.

Based upon the project team's review of the proposals and bidders, we propose the following recommendations to the Novi Community School District for contract award:

Bid Division 142: HVAC
Mr. Jeff Vadasz
Goyette Mechanical Co., Inc.
TOTAL \$ 535,118.00

Award Recommendation Amount: \$ 535,118.00

It was moved by Mrs. Murphy and supported by Mrs. Hood that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve the recommended bid to Goyette Mechanical for \$535,118.00.

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy, and Mrs. Roney
(by Roll Call)

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Secure Entry and Classroom/Office Technology

IDS worked with the district technology staff, TMP Architecture, Inc, McCarthy & Smith, Inc., and Plante Moran, PLLC to determine the needs in coordination with the design and construction plans for the secure entry renovations at Novi High School, Novi Middle School, Orchard Hills Elementary, and Village Oaks Elementary. The systems acquired and installed will be an expansion of the existing district secure access systems and include providing card access readers, control systems for controllable door hardware, intercom systems, and all programming necessary to interface new hardware with the existing access control, fire, and ADA systems.

IDS, also, worked with the district technology staff, TMP Architecture, Inc, McCarthy & Smith, Inc., and Plante Moran, PLLC to determine the needs in coordination with the design and construction plans for the classroom and office renovations and additions at Novi High School, Novi Middle School, Orchard Hills Elementary, and Village Oaks Elementary. The systems acquired and installed will be an expansion of the existing district data network and audio-visual systems. They include providing data network drops, wireless access points, flat panel displays, sound reinforcement and presentation systems, and all programming necessary for operation and interfacing the new hardware with existing data and audio-visual systems.

On Thursday, December 17, 2020, at 3:00 PM, sealed bids were received and publicly opened. Bids were opened, recorded.

Three firms submitted bids for the secure access systems and include providing card access readers, control systems for controllable door hardware, intercom systems, and all programming necessary to interface new hardware with the existing access control, fire, and ADA systems: Security Designs, Gemellaro Systems Integration, and Security 101.

Bidder's Name	Bid Bond	Familial Disclosure	Affidavit of Compliance	Base Bid
Security Designs	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$75,188.00
Gemellaro Systems Integration	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$136,094.73

Most importantly, we recognize the toll that this experience is taking on our students and staff. As second semester started on January 25, we had students walk through our doors who had not been inside of their school for months. We have students, who are new to the district, who have not seen their classrooms or the inside of their school even now. This, we know, has limited their social interactions and had a tremendous emotional toll on them and their families.

Students do not have access to the same experiences that they had pre-pandemic and there is a toll on their mental and social-emotional health. Concerts, plays, after school activities, athletics – these and many more experiences have all been limited or non-existent for eleven months. Social in-person interaction with other students and with teachers has been significantly reduced for over eleven months and this has had a negative impact.

There has also been a toll on the mental health of our staff, especially our teaching staff. We have asked them to teach in two modalities – virtual and hybrid. We have asked them to find ways to engage students in non-traditional ways. We have asked them to reimagine how to teach while living through a pandemic. Our teachers have spent time learning new skills and planning new lessons, and that has taken time away from their families and other activities.

We have asked administrators to manage two learning modalities within their building. We have asked administrators to reimagine how to service students in a virtual and hybrid world. The concern and worry of our administrative staff is clearly visible.

We have asked staff to find ways to feed students and to transport students and to provide technology to students in ways that we have never done before.

And we have done this while offering an in-person and a virtual option since September 8, 2020, when many districts around us chose to only offer a virtual option.

I have been told that our current hybrid and virtual approaches work for students. I have been told that our current hybrid and virtual approaches do not work for students.

I have received praise for our current hybrid and virtual approaches. I have received criticism for our current hybrid and virtual approaches.

Over the course of this school year, we have done many things to support our students to try and mitigate the impact of the unusual circumstances we have found ourselves in. A partial list of some of these intentional efforts made to engage students includes:

- Hired seven retired teachers to support students
- Started a tutoring program to support students in grades 5-12
- Created virtual intervention services for students
- Distributed technology devices to students
- Distributed whiteboards to all students
- Created social emotional lessons at all levels
- Intentionally solicited feedback from students
- Created virtual student activities

- For example, virtual homecoming activities at the high school
- Created “New to Novi” counseling group
- Provided staff professional development on virtual learning
- Created virtual meetings and clubs for students after school
- Redeployed instructional coaches to work with students
- Reached out to support students through Zoom conferences with teachers and administrators

Teachers report that students are learning. I have visited classrooms and talked with teachers and have seen our students learn.

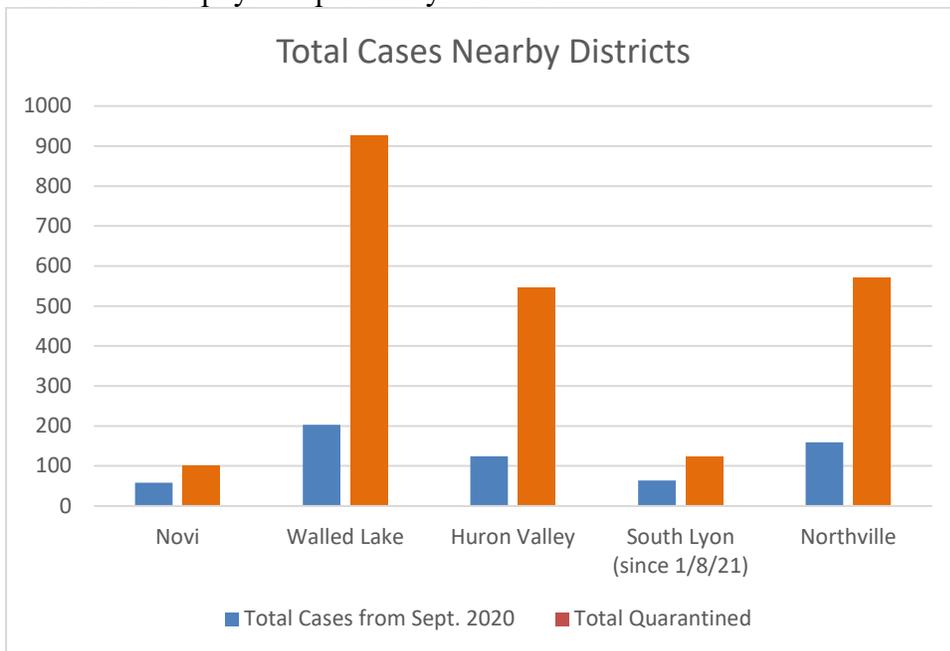
In our buildings, I have seen our teachers working. I have talked with our teachers about the instruction that they are providing. I have great confidence that our teachers are working hard and, in many instances, working harder than they have in the past trying to juggle virtual and in-person lessons, learning new technology, creating connections with students, developing new methods of assessment, engaging students, and so much more.

I understand that parents are frustrated because of the unique nature of this school year. I know that staff are frustrated this year as well.

The most important question at this point is when can we “return to normal,” when can we either return to five-day in-person instruction or increase the amount of in-person instruction for our students.

In Novi we have charted a course that has focused on two priorities – education and safety.

I believe that we have created a safe environment. We can look at the COVID dashboards of districts with a physical proximity to Novi.



District	Positive Cases Week of Jan. 25	Quarantine Week of Jan. 25
Novi	4	4
Walled Lake	7	56
Huron Valley	6	156
South Lyon	6	30
Northville	3	60
	Total Cases from Sept. 2020	Total Quarantined
Novi	58	<100
Walled Lake	203	926
Huron Valley	124	545
South Lyon	64	122 (since 1-8-21)
Northville	159	570

These numbers demonstrate that in Novi we have found a way to keep our students and our staff safe in our schools.

We also have found ways to provide a quality educational experience for our students. It is not the typical experience but in my visits to classrooms and in my conversations with teachers I have seen quality lessons and quality teaching.

None of us anticipated that the impact of the pandemic would last from March 16, 2020, through today.

But, the COVID numbers are higher now than they were when we made the decision to create a hybrid and a virtual option to begin the 2020-2021 school year.

By district, cases per 10,000	
8/6 - 8/19	4.3
8/13 - 8/20	6.7
8/13 - 8/26	6.7
8/20 - 9/2	9.1
8/27 - 9/9	8.8
9/3 - 9/16	12.2
9/10 - 9/23	15.2
9/17 - 9/30	8.8
9/24 - 10/7	4.9
10/1 - 10/14	7.3
10/8 - 10/21	16.7
10/15 - 10/28	24.3
10/22 - 11/4	28.6
10/29 - 11/11	37.4
11/5 - 11/18	51.6

11/12 - 11/25	60.2
11/19 - 12/2	61.7
12/3 - 12/16	48.3
12/17-12/30	35.5
12/24 - 1/6	29.5
12/31 - 1/14	30.4
1/7 - 1/20	34.0
1/14 - 1/27	31.6

We are still struggling with the pandemic.

We are learning about the impact of the pandemic on different age groups. At our last meeting I presented information that showed that the impact by age group.

Week	5-9 Ages	10-13 Ages	14-18 Ages	Total cases	% of 5- 9 cases	% of 10-13 cases	% of 14-18 cases
23-Sep	30	35	133	198	15.15%	17.68%	67.17%
30-Sep	24	37	75	136	17.65%	27.21%	55.15%
7-Oct	20	27	63	110	18.18%	24.55%	57.27%
14-Oct	31	33	80	144	21.53%	22.92%	55.56%
21-Oct	35	35	128	198	17.68%	17.68%	64.65%
28-Oct	56	55	190	301	18.60%	18.27%	63.12%
4-Nov	74	87	256	417	17.75%	20.86%	61.39%
11-Nov	116	129	376	621	18.68%	20.77%	60.55%
18-Nov	172	169	465	806	21.34%	20.97%	57.69%
25-Nov	179	177	485	841	21.28%	21.05%	57.67%
2-Dec	116	174	431	721	16.09%	24.13%	59.78%
9-Dec	130	151	424	705	18.44%	21.42%	60.14%
16-Dec	126	133	375	634	19.87%	20.98%	59.15%
23-Dec	95	101	244	440	21.59%	22.95%	55.45%
30-Dec	61	75	151	287	21.25%	26.13%	52.61%
6-Jan	51	78	196	325	15.69%	24.00%	60.31%
13-Jan	82	114	281	477	17.19%	23.90%	58.91%
20-Jan	80	106	259	445	17.97%	23.82%	58.20%
27-Jan	68	101	216	385	17.66%	26.23%	56.10%

These numbers show that students age 5-9 and 10-13 are less impacted by the virus. These would be our students in grades K-6. In our county it is important to remember that many of our students in these age groups have not been in school during the first five months of the school year. How that fact impacts these numbers is not known.

And while these numbers give us hope, the CDC reminds us that there is an impact on all ages. In guidance from the CDC on issues related to school return

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>) we learn some important points:

While fewer children than adults have had COVID-19 in the United States, the number of school-aged children with COVID-19 has been increasing.¹ Children and adolescents can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, can get sick with COVID-19, and can spread the virus to others.²

Most children and adolescents with the virus that causes COVID-19 have mild symptoms and some have no symptoms at all.²⁻⁴ The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in adults and children and can look like other common illnesses, such as colds, strep throat, influenza, or allergies.²⁻⁴ Children, like adults, who are infected but have no symptoms can still spread the virus to others.⁵

While the number of children who have been hospitalized with COVID-19 has been low compared with adults, one-third of hospitalized children with COVID-19 have been admitted to the intensive care unit.⁶

Because children with the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread it to other children and to adults,^{2,5,8,9} it is important to take measures to minimize risk of spread in school settings.

Resuming and maintaining in-person learning may pose risks to children, teachers, school administrators, and other staff in the school environment, and their families and household members. Among adults, older age and having underlying medical conditions increases the risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

The many benefits of in-person schooling should be weighed against the risks of spreading COVID-19 in the school and community.

The CDC presents a scale of risk from low to high. The lowest risk is an all virtual environment. The next level is some risk, then medium risk, then higher risk, and highest risk:

Some risk:

- Hybrid Learning Model, where **most** students and teachers participate in virtual learning and **some** students and teachers engage in in-person learning, with:
 - **Small**, in-person classes, activities, and events
 - Cohorting and alternating or staggered schedules, **rigorously applied**
 - **No mixing** of groups of students and teachers throughout/across school days
 - **No sharing** of objects between students and teachers
 - Students, teachers, and staff following **all steps** to [protect themselves and others at all times](#) including proper use of face masks, social distancing, and hand hygiene
 - Regularly scheduled **and consistent** (i.e., at least daily or between uses) [cleaning](#) of frequently touched areas

Medium risk:

- Hybrid Learning Model, where **most** students and teachers engage in in-person learning and **some** students and teachers participate in virtual learning, with:
 - **Larger** in-person classes, activities, and events
 - Cohorting and alternating or staggered schedules **applied with some exceptions**
 - **Some mixing** of groups of students and teachers throughout/across school days
 - **Minimal sharing** of objects between students and teachers
 - Students, teachers, and staff following **all steps** to [protect themselves and others](#) such as proper use of face masks, social distancing, and hand hygiene
 - Regularly scheduled (i.e., at least daily or between uses) [cleaning](#) of frequently touched areas

Higher risk:

- Students and teachers engage **entirely in in-person** learning, activities, and events with:
 - **Some mixing** of groups of students and teachers throughout/across school days
 - **Some sharing** of objects between students and teachers
 - Students, teachers, and staff following **some** steps to [protect themselves and others](#) such as proper use of face masks, social distancing, and hand hygiene
 - **Irregular** [cleaning](#) of frequently touched areas

Highest risk:

- Students and teachers **engage entirely in in-person** learning, activities, and events with:
 - Students **mixing freely** between classes and activities
 - Students and teachers **freely sharing** objects
 - Students, teachers, and staff do **not/are not** following steps to [protect themselves and others](#) such as proper use of face masks, social distancing, and hand hygiene
 - **Irregular** [cleaning](#) of frequently touched areas

I would suggest that we are currently operating at the “some” and “medium” risk levels.

The state of Michigan guidance, *State of Michigan Guidelines for Operating Schools Safely*, discusses safety protocols. We meet most of those – designated COVID-19 point of contact, attempt to cohort, personal protective equipment, hand hygiene, and ventilation. But the report provides this guidance for spacing and movement:

1. Spacing and movement
 - a. The recommendations are:
 - i. Maintain six feet of distance at all times.
 - ii. In instructional settings, space desks six feet apart, making creative use of all school spaces (e.g., gymnasiums, cafeterias, multi-purpose rooms).
 - iii. If physical distancing of six feet cannot be maintained in instructional settings with an all in-person approach, schools should consider alternative strategies to reduce student density. This may include the use of a hybrid schedule that allows students to maintain six feet of distancing and attend in-person school for at least half-time.
 - iv. If a school district nonetheless proceeds with in-person learning, at a minimum it should:

1. Maintain minimum seated distance of three feet in classrooms
2. Consider the feasibility of installing barriers/partitions for additional risk mitigation
3. Ensure that when students are eating at lunch with masks off, they maintain six feet of physical distance to the extent feasible
4. Class sizes should be kept to the level afforded by the spacing guidance listed above

If we were to bring back all of our hybrid students, we would be hard pressed in many classrooms to provide even 3-feet of space between students and desks. We created hybrid classrooms that, when combined, may exceed the typical class size for Novi because we knew that on hybrid days they would have under 15 students.

It has been suggested that districts around us are returning students to school five days a week so Novi should as well. In my experience, basing a conclusion on the argument that “everyone else is doing it so I should too” has never been the best way to convince someone that I am right. And in this particular case, the argument is also not true.

Here are Oakland County districts and their approaches to return to school: (F2F – face-to-face)

District	Elementary Return to School	Secondary Return to School
Avondale	Hybrid – Beginning February 18	Hybrid – Beginning February 18
Berkley	Hybrid – AM/PM – February 1	Hybrid MS: Feb 8 (with A/B every other day, Wednesdays asynchronous, Gr 6-8) HS: Feb 22 (with A/B every other day, Wednesdays asynchronous, Gr 6-8)
Birmingham	Hybrid – January 11	Hybrid – January 11
Bloomfield Hills	Hybrid	Hybrid
Brandon	Hybrid	Hybrid
Clarenceville	Hybrid – January 25	Hybrid – Feb 1 MS; Feb. 8 HS
Clarkston	5 days F2F – Feb 1	5 days F2F Feb. 1
Clawson	5 days F2F	Hybrid AM/PM 4 days
Ferndale	Virtual	Virtual
Hazel Park	Hybrid	Hybrid
Holly	5 days F2F	5 days F2F
Huron Valley	4 days a week	4 days a week
Lake Orion	Elementary has a 4hr: 15 minute session each day in the mornings with a grab & go lunch format at dismissal. We provide 1-2 asynchronous lessons in the afternoons.	Hybrid 6-12 are in an alternating day hybrid model with asynchronous work on the non-in-person days

Lamphere	Virtual	Virtual
Madison	Hybrid	Hybrid
Oak Park	Virtual	Virtual
Oxford	5 days F2F	5 days F2F
Pontiac	Hybrid	Hybrid
Rochester	Hybrid	Hybrid
Royal Oak	Hybrid	Hybrid
South Lyon	4 days per week all day F2F	4 days per week hybrid Feb 8: allowing secondary students to attend their two assigned days and the other two if they wish. Folks from home can still join in via google meet. Students have 3 class blocks a day. Day A – 3 class periods. Day B – 3 class periods.
Southfield	Virtual	Virtual
Troy	4 days F2F	4 days F2F (only 25% F2F)
Walled Lake	5 days F2F	Hybrid
Waterford	5 days F2F	5 days F2F
West Bloomfield	Hybrid	Hybrid
Northville	5 days F2F Cohorting with an aide to support classrooms were a teacher is not present	Hybrid

As seen in this chart there are a variety of approaches in Oakland County to returning to school.

In the Novi Community School District, we made the conscious choice to provide a hybrid and a virtual format in our return to school plan. We did so for several reasons, not the least of which, was the importance placed on social distancing.

The discussion we are now having really comes down to an issue of social distancing. We can meet all of the safety protocols spelled out by the CDC and the state of Michigan – masks, improved ventilation, hand washing, disinfecting surfaces, and social distancing – with our current hybrid approach. If we bring hybrid students back to school together we cannot meet the social distancing recommendations from the CDC or the state of Michigan.

In December we invited parents to recommit for second semester. In asking for that recommitment we informed parents that the goal would be to try and return hybrid students back to five-day in-person instruction during second semester if the conditions warranted that for our students. We were clear that if parents were uncomfortable with that possibility then the choice for their children should be virtual.

However, in saying that it must be noted that if we return to five-day in-person instruction we

cannot have social distance.

Without social distance, the school day would look different than the school day looks now. Children would remain at their desks for the majority of the day. Desks would face one direction to limit face-to-face interaction. We would not have space for students to engage in safe, socially distant activities in the classroom. Teachers would teach from the front of the room in a whole class format. Teachers could walk through the classroom aisles but one-on-one classroom instruction, interaction, and support would be minimal. Lunch would limit access to the cafeterias and be in classrooms or be in the lunchroom but keeping students apart as much as possible.

The majority of teachers and school staff are not vaccinated at this point. We believe, although it is not guaranteed, that most teachers and school staff will be vaccinated over the next several weeks.

A final issue is middle and high school students. Our middle and high schools are organized around a 6 period day. What that means for COVID exposure is that our middle and high school students would have six periods with different groups of students in each classroom. Our teachers would also have exposure to many more students during the course of the day than our elementary and Meadows teachers. Students would also be in the hallways six times during the day. This structure increases the number of people each middle and high school student and each middle and high school teacher is exposed to each day.

In our elementary schools and Meadows, students have reduced movement. These students have a modified cohort, in that they are with the students in their classroom for the majority of the day.

The difference between middle/high school and the elementary/Meadows experience makes bringing back middle and high school students more problematic.

The Board of Education has expressed to me a desire to have a plan on how to bring back students to five-day in-person instruction. I will provide that. But before I do I would like to express my belief that the Board should consider maintaining our current approach. I strongly believe that what we are currently doing is working.

Our hybrid and virtual students are learning.

Our hybrid and virtual students are safe.

Our positive cases and quarantine cases are significantly lower than neighboring districts.

When I examine both learning and safety of students and staff, what we are currently doing is working. It is not perfect. We continue to strive to improve our approach. But I know that our students are learning and that our students and staff are safe.

I know the argument is that other districts are going back. But many of them are not going back fulltime, many that are back have higher COVID positive tests and multiple quarantines, and the

in-person learning is not the same as what we are providing in our current format. My recommendation would be to continue our current approach – the hybrid and the virtual options until COVID case counts drop significantly.

When would I recommend that we consider bringing back our hybrid students? When our COVID numbers drop close to what they were when we started this school year. Under 20 cases per 10,000 in our school district, average of under 25 in our three zip codes, and under 125 average daily case counts in Oakland County.

But the Board has been clear that you would like to consider an alternative approach.

At the January 21, 2021, Board of Education meeting, I suggested that we could look to return to five-day a week in-person instruction if the COVID-19 case counts met certain thresholds. I have made some revisions to those recommendations and include information on a secondary return:

1. K-6 hybrid students could return to school five days a week if:
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District as reported on the Oakland County Health Division COVID website (<https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>) were at or below 30 for three consecutive weeks.
 - i. That last three weeks:
 1. 12/31 – 1/14: 30.4
 2. 1/7 – 1/20: 34.0
 3. 1/14 – 1/27: 31.6
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or below 55 for three consecutive weeks (as calculated by tracking daily numbers given at the Oakland County Health Division website <https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>)
 - i. The last three week averages:
 1. Week of January 11: 53.53
 2. Week of January 18: 55.05
 3. Week of January 25: 55.53
 - c. 14 day average case counts in Oakland County are at or below 200 for three consecutive weeks as reported on the Oakland County Health Division Weekly COVID-19 Report (posted to the district website) for three consecutive weeks:
 - i. The last three week averages:
 1. Week of January 13: December 30 – January 12: 287
 2. Week of January 20: January 6 - 19: 248
 3. Week of January 27: January 13 – 26: 202
2. K-6 hybrid students would stay in five-day a week school unless numbers began to trend in the wrong direction.
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District were at or above 45 for three consecutive weeks.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or above 75 for three consecutive weeks
 - c. Case counts in Oakland County are above 275 for three consecutive weeks

3. Taking into account the increased movement and the increased exposure to multiple groups of students, 7-12 hybrid students could return to school five days a week if:
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District as reported on the Oakland County Health Division COVID website (<https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>) were at or below 20 for three consecutive weeks.
 - i. That last three weeks:
 1. 12/31 – 1/14: 30.4
 2. 1/7 – 1/20: 34.0
 3. 1/14 – 1/27: 31.6
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or below 40 for three consecutive weeks (as calculated by tracking daily numbers given at the Oakland County Health Division website <https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>)
 - i. The last three week averages:
 1. Week of January 11: 53.53
 2. Week of January 18: 55.05
 3. Week of January 25: 55.53
 - c. 14-day average case counts in Oakland County are at or below 125 for three consecutive weeks as reported on the Oakland County Health Division Weekly COVID-19 Report (posted to the district website) for three consecutive weeks:
 - i. The last three week averages:
 1. Week of January 13: December 30 – January 12: 287
 2. Week of January 20: January 6 - 19: 248
 3. Week of January 27: January 13 – 26: 202
4. 7-12 hybrid students would stay in five-day a week school unless numbers began to trend in the wrong direction.
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District were at or above 40 for three consecutive weeks.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or above 60 for three consecutive weeks
 - c. Case counts in Oakland County are above 225 for three consecutive weeks

At this point, with these metrics, we have not met the thresholds outlined above and could not bring hybrid students back to five-day in-person instruction for at least three weeks at either the K-6 or 7-12 levels.

But, to reiterate, my preferred recommendation, would be to continue our current model until COVID-19 cases were under 20 cases per 10,000 in our school district, average of under 25 in our three zip codes, and under 125 average daily case counts in Oakland County.

The Superintendent presents the following recommendations to the Board.

Recommendation One stands alone. It can be ignored or voted up or down. If it is approved the other recommendations do not need to be voted on. If Recommendation One is ignored or fails then move to Recommendations 2, 3, and 4.

Recommendation One:

1. That the Novi Community School District Board of Education continue our current model until COVID-19 cases reach these thresholds. If these thresholds are met for three weeks in a row hybrid students would return to school for five-day per week in-person instruction.
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District as reported on the Oakland County Health Division COVID website (<https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>) were at or below 20 cases.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or below 25 per 10,000 for three consecutive weeks (as calculated by tracking daily numbers given at the Oakland County Health Division website <https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>)
 - c. 14-day average case counts in Oakland County are at or below 125 for three consecutive weeks as reported on the Oakland County Health Division Weekly COVID-19 Report (posted to the district website) for three consecutive weeks

If Recommendation One fails or is not voted on then move to the following recommendations.

Recommendation Two:

1. That the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve returning K-6 hybrid students to five-day a week in-person learning if our COVID-19 case counts meet these thresholds:
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District as reported on the Oakland County Health Division COVID website (<https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>) were at or below 30 for three consecutive weeks.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or below 55 for three consecutive weeks (as calculated by tracking daily numbers given at the Oakland County Health Division website <https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>)
 - c. 14 day average case counts in Oakland County are at or below 200 for three consecutive weeks as reported on the Oakland County Health Division Weekly COVID-19 Report (posted to the district website) for three consecutive weeks:
2. K-6 hybrid students would stay in five-day a week school unless numbers began to trend in the wrong direction.
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District were at or above 45 for three consecutive weeks.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or above 75 for three consecutive weeks
 - c. Case counts in Oakland County are above 275 for three consecutive weeks

Recommendation Three:

1. That the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve returning 7-12 hybrid students to five-day a week in-person learning if our COVID-19 case counts meet these thresholds:

- a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District as reported on the Oakland County Health Division COVID website (<https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>) were at or below 20 for three consecutive weeks.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or below 40 for three consecutive weeks (as calculated by tracking daily numbers given at the Oakland County Health Division website <https://www.oakgov.com/covid/casesByZip.html>)
 - c. 14 day average case counts in Oakland County are at or below 125 for three consecutive weeks as reported on the Oakland County Health Division Weekly COVID-19 Report (posted to the district website) for three consecutive weeks:
2. 7-12 hybrid students would stay in five-day a week school unless numbers began to trend in the wrong direction.
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District were at or above 40 for three consecutive weeks.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or above 60 for three consecutive weeks
 - c. Case counts in Oakland County are above 225 for three consecutive weeks

Recommendation Four

1. That the Board of Education directs the Superintendent to communicate weekly the status on meeting thresholds to the parent and school community.
2. That the Board of Education and administrative team work collaboratively with teachers and support staff to ensure that plans are in place to begin five-day in-person instruction for hybrid students when the thresholds are met.
3. That virtual students remain virtual as per their choice in December.

Recommendation One was moved by Mr. Cook, but there was no support. **MOTION FAILED**

It was moved by Mr. Mena and supported by Mrs. Murphy that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve recommendation two, returning K-6 hybrid students to five-day a week in-person learning if our COVID-19 case counts meet the listed thresholds.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Mena, and Mrs. Roney
(by Roll Call)

Nays: 1 Mr. Smith **MOTION CARRIED**

It was moved by Mrs. Murphy and supported by Mr. Mena that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve recommendation three:

1. returning 7-12 hybrid students to five-day a week in-person learning if our COVID-19 case counts meet these thresholds:
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District as reported on the Oakland County Health Division weekly COVID report were at or below 20 for three consecutive weeks.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or below 40 for three consecutive weeks (as calculated by tracking daily numbers given at the Oakland County Health Division website.

- c. 14-day average case counts in Oakland County are at or below 125 for three consecutive weeks as reported on the Oakland County Health Division Weekly COVID-19 Report (posted to the district website) for three consecutive weeks:
2. 7-12 hybrid students would stay in five-day a week school unless numbers began to trend in the wrong direction.
 - a. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District were at or above 40 for three consecutive weeks.
 - b. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes – 48374, 48375, 48377 – is at or above 60 for three consecutive weeks.
 - c. Case counts in Oakland County are above 225 for three consecutive weeks.

Mr. Mena moved and supported by Mrs. Roney to amend the current motion to modify the Oakland County case count number from 125 to 140 to make it more consistent with the other two values that we have for this particular set of metrics

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Mena, Mr. Smith, and Mrs. Roney
(by Roll Call)

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

It was moved by Mrs. Murphy and supported by Mr. Mena that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve recommendation four:

1. That the Board of Education directs the Superintendent to communicate weekly the status on meeting thresholds to the parent and school community.
2. That the Board of Education and administrative team work collaboratively with teachers and support staff to ensure that plans are in place to begin five-day in-person instruction for hybrid students when the thresholds are met.
3. That virtual students remain virtual as per their choice in December.

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Mena, Mr. Smith, and Mrs. Roney
(by Roll Call)

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

2021 MASB Board of Directors Election

As a member of the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB), the Novi Community School District Board of Education has the right to cast a ballot for a group director in the MASB Board of Directors Election. Regions are based on geography. Novi will be casting one (1) vote in Region 8, districts with pupil membership between 5,001 and 11,000.

In our **Region 8**, there are four (4) candidates running for one (1) seat.

Region 8 (three-year term)

- Sandra Dukhie – Ferndale Public Schools
- Mary Hanser – Oxford Community Schools
- Birgit McQuiston – Lake Orion Community Schools
- Gina Walker – New Haven Community Schools

The Novi Community Schools Board of Education is asked to discuss tonight for whom they

would like to decide to cast the vote for. At our regular meeting on February 18, 2021 the board will vote and take action.

Voting takes place via online ballot. The district receives one ballot, which has been emailed to the Superintendent's Secretary. After a decision is made the secretary will cast the ballot for the Board. Ballot deadline is 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 1, 2021.

Copier Equipment Purchase

With the continued support of the Novi Community, the District passed a Bond issue in 2019 that will support facility and technology projects. Part of the plan for the bond projects was the refresh of district copiers. The district currently has 53 copiers with an average age of seven years old. Part one of the refresh plan will be to replace 36 (35 black/white copiers, 1 color copier) of the oldest and least reliable devices. In addition, the project will include the installation of Papercut.

The District received proposals from two vendors based on state cooperative purchasing contracts; Applied Imaging and Ricoh. Each vendor has established contracts with school districts in the tri-county area. Both vendors reviewed the District's existing fleet inventory, copy volumes, and serviceability to determine their recommendations.

Anthony Locricchio, Senior Technology Coordinator, and Jeff Mozdierz, Technology Director, reviewed each company's proposal. The proposed equipment, copy volume, and installation plans were aligned as part of the review process. Each vendor included device rebates after installation. The replaced equipment will be disposed of with an independent recycler.

The administration is recommending the Board of Education approve the purchases of 36 copiers, installation services, training, and support from Applied Imaging in the total amount of \$481,708.84. Pricing is based on the Michigan Intergovernmental Trade Network (MITN) cooperative. The district is recommending the Applied Imaging solution based on the Cannon equipment design, the reputation of Applied Imaging, and the savings on support and maintenance over the Ricoh proposal. The estimated savings on the cost per copy is approximately \$40,507 over 60 months.

The purchase of copier equipment is presented and recommended to the Board of Education at this meeting, with awarding of the bid at the next regular Board meeting on February 18, 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Governance and Policy Committee

Mr. Cook, Board Vice-President and Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee, reported that the committee reviewed a Board procedure and a policy regarding remote meetings. He stated there were several question, so it was sent back to Mr. Sutton for clarity. Mr. Cook said there was one on bullying that the committee made minor revisions to. He mentioned that the committee will get back together before brining any recommendations to the Board.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were three (3) additional comments from the audience this evening regarding the return to school plan and the District's DEI initiatives.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Steve Matthews, Superintendent of Schools, expressed his deep gratitude and appreciation to the teachers, administrators, drivers, secretaries, childcare workers, early childhood staff, tech staff, food service, and custodial staff. He reported that this has been a most unusual year. Dr. Matthews stated that what he knows to be true is that each and every one of those staff members has done everything they can to make this year successful.

He said that today he walked the high school and there was food stacked on tables awaiting our families as they would come to pick up that food. Dr. Matthews mentioned that food service has been distributing food since last march. He reported that when he walked into the high school he saw tubs of work that our virtual and hybrid teachers had collected to distribute to our students when they came in to pick it up, so that they could continue to do work at home.

Dr. Matthews stated that our teachers and our staff have done amazing things this year and he want them to know the he deeply, deeply appreciates everything that they have done. He said that he believes we have made a tremendous difference this year.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Greg McIntyre, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, expressed his gratitude to the Board for reviewing the copier refresh proposal. He reported that is one of the expense reductions the he has been looking at since he arrived in Novi. Mr. McIntyre stated that he is really happy about the efficiency and the expense reduction that we can gain from moving to these new copiers.

He informed the Board that last week Moody's, the investment firm used to evaluate out credit risk for our bonds, is changing their rating methodology. Mr. McIntyre said the old way used to lump cities, counties, and school districts. He mentioned that now they will look at school districts individually. Mr. McIntyre reported that currently we have a double, a two (2), rating, which is a high grade rating with Moody's.

He stated that they have identified 34 school districts that will be reviewed for possible downgrade and he was happy to say that Novi is not one of those school districts. Mr. McIntyre said that it is important to continue to monitor our fund balance, our enrollment, and our debt. He mentioned that as more developments occur, he will keep the Board abreast as it happens.

Dr. Gary Kinzer, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, reported that Monday afternoon we had our fourth mentee Monday series of professional development for our new teachers. He stated that Darby Hoppenstedt presented our MTSS system, first to our 7-12 new teachers and then later to our K-6 new teachers.

Dr. Kinzer said that he and Dr. Webber had a conversation after the presentation and how impressive our first year teachers are. He mentioned that their level of engage and the stories they shared about their commitment to their students, whether it was virtual or in a hybrid

modality was really impressive. Dr. Kinzer stated that he wanted the Board to know that we have a tremendous group of first year teachers.

Dr. RJ Webber, Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services, expressed his gratitude to a whole bunch of people out there and also each and every parent, student, and Board member. He reported that this has been really hard and we should give ourselves and each other some grace that we all need to make it through this. Dr. Webber stated that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. He said that when you hear about people getting vaccinated there is a kind of hope that we have not had in a long time and it feels really good. Dr. Webber mentioned to please take care of yourselves.

BOARD COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Hood, Board Treasurer, reported that one of our community members is a mental health professional. She stated that many community members are mental health professionals, but this one in particular does mental health moments on her Facebook. Mrs. Hood said that she listened to her today and it was about bullying. She mentioned that many things struck her, but one thing was, don't be a bystander, be an up stander, and when you notice or witness bullying, ask yourself who benefits from me being quiet.

Mrs. Hood commented on the last commentary from a parent of teacher. She stated that she has been so gratified by so many people reaching out and saying, via email, that we have all been doing a great job and that they appreciate everything the District, teachers, and administration are doing for our kids.

Mrs. Hood said then we have some, and there are multiple parents, who send the Board 15 emails and they are often insulting, rude, condescending, and unprofessional towards the leadership of our district. She mentioned that they are elected and can take it or leave it, but towards the leadership of our District, our teachers. Mrs. Hood stated, let your son or daughter read it before you hit send or before your tweet because middles schoolers and high schoolers will say, oh gee, do not send that; that is not nice; that is cruel. She reported that bullies behind keyboards are still bullies and when you send 15 emails berating our superintendent to open schools on this date.

Mrs. Hood said we are in receipt of an unintended communication for this same person who says that the COVID risk is nonsenses and there is no reason to treat it differently than the flu. She mentioned that you really need to stop and think what you are doing before you hit send that stuff. Mrs. Hood stated that she just had to speak up. She reported that she is speaking for herself and does not speak for the Board. Mrs. Hood said we do our wonderful teachers and staff and Para pros a disservice when we do not push back on this kind of staff.

Mr. Mena, Board Secretary, reported that he attended the library board meeting last week and they brought up an issue. He stated that the library has not always been open because of COVID, so Chartwells has not been able to use the area where they have their service. Mr. Mena said that the library board and director took it upon themselves to waive the fee that they would normally charge for this last section of time. He mentioned that is was the fair thing to do for Chartwells and tells him that they really cherish the relationship that they have with

Chartwells and the District. Mr. Mena expressed his gratitude to the library board and Julie Farkas for that.

Mr. Mena said that he wanted to thank everyone who worked so hard to advocate for our student athletes over the past month. He mentioned they were those who were respectfully vocal on social media and who reached out to our legislators and anyone who took the time to go out to Lansing to have their voices heard. Mr. Mena reported that you were clearly heard and did indeed make a difference, so thank you.

Dr. Ruskin, Board President, expressed he gratitude to the Board and administration and kudos to everyone for all they do. She reported importantly to our students, there were some students who had a learning experience, a life lesson over the weekend and let their voices be heard. Dr. Ruskin stated that we really do look forward to the student athletes returning safely and with safety protocols in place very soon. She expressed her appreciation for everyone's feedback

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mrs. Murphy and supported by Mrs. Hood that the Novi Board of Education Regular Board meeting be adjourned

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Murphy,
and Mrs. Roney (by Roll Call)

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 10:21 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for February 18, 2021 at 7:00 p.m, via Zoom.

Willy Mena, Secretary

An online recording of this meeting is available on YouTube and on the District Website: novi.k12.mi.us