



**Minutes of a Regular Meeting, February 18, 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 18, 2021, beginning at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

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

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 Mrs. Murphy and supported by Mrs. Roney that the Novi Board of Education approve the agenda as presented.

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

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

There were 9 comments from the audience regarding returning to school full-time, in person and DEI.

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 February 4, 2021

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

Ayes: 7 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hood, Mr. Mena, 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>
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B. Retirements and Resignations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Micu, Mary	NM	Special Ed Para	Retirement	04-30-21
Schopieray, Kristen	ESB	Receptionist/HR Asst.	Resigned	03-05-21

A. Leaves of Absence

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Armstrong, Christina	PV	Kindergarten Teacher	LOA #1-Child Care	02-22-21 to 06-11-21
Miller, Lauren	OH	4 th Grade Teacher	LOA #1-Child Care	2021-2022 School Year
Pardeshi, Tithi	ECEC	Special Ed Para	LOA #1-Child Care	02-22-21 to 06-11-21

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

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

Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

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.

It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mrs. Hood that the Novi Community School District Board of Education’s MASB Board of Directors Election ballot for **Region 8** be cast for

Our attorney recommends the formal adoption of the attached resolution to ensure that we meet all appropriate legal standards.

It was moved by Mr. Cook and supported by Mr. Mena that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve the attached resolution on the purchase of the Walsh College – Novi property and facility.

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

Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

Resolution for School Boards to Meet in Person

On February 11, 2021 MASB sent out a request asking interested Boards to pass a resolution allowing for in-person school board meetings. A sample resolution is attached for your consideration.

It was moved by Mr. Mena and supported by Mr. Cook that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve the attached resolution, as read, for in-person school board meetings.

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

Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

2021 Roofing Program - Deerfield

On January 15, 2021 the District received bids from (3) contractors. After the receipt of bids, PMC participated in post bid reviews with two firms (CEI Roofing, and Butcher and Butcher). Concluding several discussions with both firms, the bond team recommends awarding to Butcher and Butcher. Butcher and Butcher's ability to meet our schedule and provide the specified materials were key factors in this recommendation.

The budget for the Deerfield Roofing replacement, including soft costs is: \$2,795,963.00. Based on this award and anticipated soft costs, we expect this work to come in under budget with an anticipated final cost of \$2,620,000.

The bond team recommends the District administration enter into a subcontract agreement with Butcher and Butcher pending final negotiation by Plante Moran Cresa (PMC) and Thrun Law Firm on behalf of NCSD.

Attached for reference is StructureTec's award recommendation package dated February 03, 2021. PMC is available at your convenience to answer any questions you may have regarding this recommendation for award.

The roofing bids are presented and recommended to the Board of Education at this meeting, with awarding of the bids at the March 4, 2021 Board meeting.

Extended Instruction Flexibility Plan

At the February 4, 2021, the Board and Superintendent engaged in a conversation regarding allowing the Superintendent to have the flexibility to be able to move between instruction modalities based on the COVID numbers that are trending.

This comes tonight for discussion and will come back for action at the March 4, 2021 regular Board meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Curriculum Committee

Mrs. Roney, Board Trustee and Chair of the Curriculum Committee, reported that the committee had a robust discussion around PE credit. She stated that Mr. Todd Pennycuff shared valuable historical information with regards to Physical Education. Mrs. Roney said that the committee will explore this further and bring their findings and recommendation to the board at a later date.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were no further comments from the audience.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Steve Matthews, Superintendent of Schools, reported that one of the comments this evening asked about the school start times. He stated that we will have information for the Board at the March 4th Board meeting. Dr. Matthews reminded the Board of discussions they had last year and that we will further those discussions with our teachers this year. He said that we have a path to move forward and we will bring that to the Board in March.

Dr. Matthews mentioned that will include discussions about the walk zones because in order to have all five (5) elementary buildings start at the same time, we need to have all of our buses available and that will require change to some of the walk zones. He reported that tomorrow we will send out another update to our community.

Dr. Matthews stated that the numbers he received today from Oakland County Health have trended in the right direction, so we will have our third week of meeting the metrics. He said that our hybrid K-6 students will come back five (5) days of in-person instruction, starting Monday February 22nd. Dr. Matthews reported that our virtual students will stay virtual.

He mentioned that some parents have asked why we are not bringing back all students and that is to continue to create safe conditions in our schools. Dr. Matthews stated that when you think of our elementary buildings normally having 500 students in each building, we will have 250 in each building. He said that we will be able to manage lunches better, buses better, and manage hallways better, so we think that bringing only our hybrid students back will continue to create those safe conditions.

Dr. Matthews reminded the Board that in December we asked parents to make a commitment for the second semester and if they wanted their students to potentially come back five (5) days a week, then they should choose hybrid. He mentioned that if they did not want that, then they should choose the virtual option. Dr. Matthews said that we were pretty explicit in December with our parents, so we believe that they understood the process.

He reported that we will move forward with our K-6 group on Monday, February 22nd, and this week when we have met the metrics and also next week when we have met our metrics, the 7-12 group will come back on March 1st.

Dr. Matthews stated that there are some concerns about class sizes, in some instances that were mentioned tonight in the comments to the Board, we are trying to address those by potentially moving classrooms to larger rooms in the building to ensure that we have as much separation as possible. He said that it is clear that we will not have six (6) feet of separation in all of our classrooms and in some classrooms, we will be down to two (2) or three (3) feet of separation between students.

Dr. Matthews reinforced that we will continue wearing masks, continue to have hand sanitizer, continuing to have disinfectant wipes, have lunchrooms where we think we will be able to have two (2) or three (3) students at a table, instead of six (6). He reported that we are going to spread students out and have spent the last several weeks addressing all of these issues. Dr. Matthews stated that we believe we are in a good spot and are looking forward to welcoming all of our hybrid K-6 students back on Monday, February 22nd, and then our 7-12 hybrid students on Monday, March 1st.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Greg McIntyre, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, expressed his gratitude to the Board for their action on the copy refresh and also the Walsh College resolution. He reported that the business office worked with DTE to see if we qualify for any rebates for workers that has already taken place in some of our buildings and we will be working with DTE to complete applications on future projects as well to see if we qualify for any additional rebates.

Dr. Gary Kinzer, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, reported that last Thursday and Friday, he and Dr. Matthews had the privilege of traveling the District to deliver years of service awards to teachers and staff who had earned their 20-year, 25-year, and 30 year services awards. He stated that for 20-years was a beautiful clock engraved and for 25 was an engraved platter. Dr. Kinzer said that this is something they normally do at our opening day assembly, which we were unable to do this year because of COVID.

He shared that it was great to be able to do it personally, in the teachers' classrooms, often in front of students. Dr. Kinzer mentioned that he thought it was well received and considering whether we might ask those individuals to walk across the stage this fall. He added that he was not sure how many of them would be excited about that, but maybe. Dr. Kinzer reported that it was a great couple of days to get out into the classrooms and celebrate with teachers that have served this District well for many years.

Dr. RJ Webber, Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services, expressed his pride in our teachers and administrators for meeting the challenge that is coming up. He reported that we are attending to certain things around social distancing by making use of the investment in flexible furnishings and creating mobile lunchrooms that are out in the hallways. Dr. Webber stated that we are creating entire classroom environments throughout the school; in the hallways and in

every nook and cranny. He said that, as Dr. Matthews mentioned, we are using our virtual teachers' rooms in order to spread out. Dr. Webber reiterated that he is very, very proud of our teachers and administrators, who in just the past week, and it was a shortened week, have been doing really everything they can to provide an experience that our kids deserve.

He reported, please understand from a teaching and Learning standpoint, that these next couple of weeks we will be bringing our K-6 kids, that have never been together with each other, together. Dr. Webber stated that classes will now go from 12 students up to 30 in a classroom and bringing in students halfway through the year who have never met before and making them feel comfortable.

He said that making sure instruction happens the way the teacher wants it to happen is going to take time. Dr. Webber remarked that he has given the principals and teachers the grace to go at whatever pace they need to, to do that well. He expressed his concern around instruction, but said he was far more concerned about the students' social emotional health and well-being and how they come together. Dr. Webber mentioned that it may feel like we are going back five (5) days, but there is going to be more work and ore stuff going on. He contended that he did not want to see a doubling of anything because our staff and students have been getting after it.

Dr. Webber congratulated Dr. Julie Bedford for earning her doctorate, which takes a significant amount of time and effort and follow-through. He explained that it takes laser-like focus for years on one subject, education.

Dr. Webber reported that Tuesday the students had off, but teachers and administrators had a day of pretty weighty issues. He explained that Easter Seals came in and worked with all staff, 7-12, around secondary trauma and how we can better help our children as they come back from this pandemic. Dr. Webber stated that the middle school had some training on capacity building around the issues of race and ethnicity. He said the conversations were really good. Dr. Webber mentioned that iReady came in and did some fantastic professional development for K-6 teachers. He explained that they looked at data.

Dr. Webber shared that the interschool council met today. He expressed his gratitude to our parents for participating. He reported that they are excited for the senior all night party folks because they think they may have a place to store their stuff. Dr. Webber stated that there is a big parking lot at Walsh College and they have Mr. McIntyre to thank for that.

He explained that the Incubator class has a fundraiser that coming up called Hustle for our Homies. Dr. Webber reported that the coffee mug displaying the great lakes, Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior, also known as homes, because our great lakes are in danger each year because 22 million pounds of plastic are leaked into the great lakes. He stated that the Novi Incubator wants to maintain our homes, while instilling environmentally conscious culture in our community.

Dr. Webber explained that the Incubator course will be conducting a 5K throughout every elementary area as a way to stroll walk. He emphasized that it will be socially distanced with all of the money going to helping our great lakes. Dr. Webber said if you hear about this coming

up, you are invited to come for a walk and hang out in your local neighborhood. He mentioned that we have another Incubator group coming out called leverage. Dr. Webber reported that he had the pleasure of watching Ms. Jessica Ganesh, Danielle Birdyshaw, and Adva Ringle provide an hour of professional development. He stated that we have 50 high school students who will actually be mentoring and working with our English language learner students, K-6, putting their energy and time into being friends and mentors for these youngsters.

BOARD COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Roney, Board Trustee, reported that this weekend she will be glued to her computer with the Winter Institute trying to get some of the classes done. She stated that it will be interesting and a learning experience and she will have a lot to report. Mrs. Roney said that it starts tomorrow morning.

She thanked RJ for the meeting. Mrs. Roney mentioned that it was a real, good conversation and Todd Pennycff schooled us on a lot of things. She reported that she looks forward to welcoming back all of the kids. Mrs. Roney expressed her gratitude to all of the teachers and administrators for getting this going.

Mrs. Hood, Board Treasurer, reported that at one of the NEF meetings, she was speaking to a mom who was very proud that her son had just been hired by NASA's jet propulsion laboratory. She stated that NASA's Rover Perseverance travelled 239 million miles and it landed on Mars today. Mrs. Hood said that is some pretty cool science and it is cool that we have kids who are graduating from our schools, getting their university educations, and going to leadership positions in organizations. She asserted that it is just very impressive and pretty neat.

Dr. Ruskin, Board President, reported that she knows exciting times are coming up here and there is a big transition happening. She stated that the other day, while she was doing something, and thought a lot about the conversation on aces. Dr. Ruskin said that unfortunately now, even every student in our District who maybe never had an ace, every single one and our teachers now have one, so she appreciated Dr. Webber's comments on how we were going to transition.

She reiterated that we are moving into an exciting time, bringing our hybrid kids back. Dr. Ruskin mentioned that we are all looking forward to that next step, but certainly some of our teachers are feeling some anxiety and she is certain that our students will too. She reported that this week will bring some challenges and some great delight. Dr. Ruskin expressed her gratitude to the Board, administration, and all the teachers for all the work that has been done over the last year. She stated that she knows everyone is up for the challenge.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for March 4, 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](https://www.novi.k12.mi.us)