

Minutes of a Regular Meeting, May 6, 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, May 6, 2021, beginning at 7:01 PM.

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

Nays: 0 MOTION CARRIED

AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Staff Appreciation

In 1944, political and educational leaders began the discussion for a day to honor teachers. In 1953, Eleanor Roosevelt was successful in her argument with congress to proclaim a National Teacher's Day, in March. In 1985, the National PTA established the first week of May as Teacher Appreciation Week, with the Tuesday being National Teacher Day.

The Novi Community School District, knowing that all staff contribute to the success of all students, is recognizing, celebrating, and honoring our dedicated staff during this first week of May for all that they do every day to support our students, their families, and each other. Especially these past 13 months, in unprecedented times, they have played a critical role in educating and shaping our students. Guiding them through the challenges in a positive direction.

Tonight, we honor our staff, but the honor is ours because we have the privilege to have staff who are exceptional. We would like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation and acknowledge their work and dedication as a Novi Community School District staff who continue to share the vision and support the voice about the future of Novi's children.

"A good teacher can inspire hope; ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning." ~ Brad Henry

School Board Member Recognition

The Novi Community School District was notified by the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) that three of our Board members were recognized at the April 29, 2021 OCSBA

and MASB Awards Ceremony. Don Wotruba, Executive Director for MASB recognized Mrs. Bobbie Murphy, Mr. Willy Mena, and Mrs. Kathy Hood.

Mrs. Bobbie Murphy will receive the Master Board Member Award. Mr. Willy Mena will receive the Level One Certification and the Award of Merit. Mrs. Kathy Hood will receive the Award of Merit.

Tonight, we would like to take the opportunity to express our deep appreciation and acknowledge their work and dedication as a Board members and we continue to share their vision and voice about the future of Novi's children in their roles as Board members, community members, and dedicated volunteers.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

There were no comments from the audience.

CONSENT AGENDA 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 April 15, 2021

It was moved by Mr. Mena and supported by Mr. Cook 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

Nays: 0 MOTION CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

Personnel Report

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

A.			New Hires		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Nelson, Levi	District	Adaptive P.E. Teacher	New Hire	BA	Fall, 2021
Hettel, Eric	MAINT	Asst. Dir. Maint./Oper.	New Hire		05-24-21
Greaves, Jason	MAINT	Semi-skilled Maint.	New Hire	Hourly	05-10-21

B. Retirements and Resignations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
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C. Leaves of Absence

Name	Bldg.	Assignment	Reason	Effective
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Administrative Transfer

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

Adva Ringle ESB Orchard Hills Principal Internal transfer 7/1/2021

It was moved by Mrs. Hood and supported by Mrs. Murphy 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

Nays: 0 MOTION CARRIED

Personnel Report B

This winter Brian Gordon informed us of his intention to retire. This set into motion a series of events that culminates tonight with a recommendation for a new athletic director.

The Human Resources Office posted the position. There were 117 applications. The applications were screened to identify those that met the job posting requirements. We then screened 40 with the online HumanEX screener.

Dr. Kinzer then reviewed the online screener results and identified 14 to participate in a phone interview. The phone interview is also a HumanEX tool and focuses on strengths and talents.

The phone screener narrowed down the field to 6 who were invited to participate in a panel interview. The panel consisted of administrators and coaches. Students also toured the candidates and provided feedback.

The panel identified 3 candidates to move to an interview with the Superintendent. One candidate subsequently dropped out because he received an improved offer from his current employer. In the end, the two candidates were interviewed by the Superintendent.

Several references were checked on the recommended candidate, including his current Superintendent, his current principal, coaches in his program, his administrative assistant, and the director of the MHSAA.

I am tonight recommending Don Watchowski to be the next Athletic Director for the Novi Community School District. Mr. Watchowski is currently the Athletic Director/Assistant Principal at Royal Oak High School in the Royal Oak School District. He has served in this capacity for five years. Previously he has served in the same role for five years in the Brandon School District and one year in the Richmond School District. He has also been a successful teacher and coach. He coached baseball in Birmingham and Royal Oak.

He is a certified athletic administrator, a member of the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, and a presenter at the MIAAA conferences.

He is an innovative athletic administrator. He supports unified sports. He founded both a student-athlete leadership team and coaches' leadership team at Royal Oak. He also supports the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

It was moved by Mr. Mena and supported by Mrs. Roney that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve Don Watchowski as the Novi community School District Athletic Director.

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

and Mrs. Roney

Nays: 0 MOTION CARRIED

Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan

The COVID cases in the state and in Oakland County are decreasing rapidly and moving in a positive direction, since our last Board meeting.

Counts by Day*

Date	Cases
4/29/2021	162
4/28/2021	270
4/27/2021	372
4/26/2021	505
4/25/2021	192
4/24/2021	393
4/23/2021	503
4/22/2021	496
4/21/2021	634
4/20/2021	625
4/19/2021	795
4/18/2021	299
4/17/2021	502
4/16/2021	793
4/15/2021	1,063

On April 29, Governor Whitmer announced her four (4) steps of MI Vacc to Normal plan to get Michigan back to some type of normalcy.

The majority of districts in Oakland County are moving forward with their current plans.

In our district, we have adopted on February 4, 2021, a model that relies on three key metrics:

- 1. Case counts per 10,000 residents in the Novi Community School District
- 2. Case count average of the three Novi zip codes
- 3. Case counts in Oakland County

Tracking these metrics has allowed our Novi Community School District Board of Education to continue to approve our five-day per week in-person instruction. The Board of Education also approved a recommendation that would cause us to reconsider the five-day per week in-person model if the metrics trended in the wrong direction and met or exceeded higher thresholds for three consecutive weeks.

Based on our metrics, we returned our K-6 hybrid students to five-day per week in-person

instruction on February 22 and our 7-12 hybrid students to five-day per week in-person instruction on March 1.

The Board of Education and the administration made a commitment to re-examine our approach when the COVID numbers began to trend in the wrong direction and met higher thresholds for three weeks in a row.

It is clear that our district trends are declining, while other districts have reported higher numbers.

I would attribute our success to our student and staff compliance with mitigation strategies — masks, hand washing, sanitizing desks, increased ventilation, increased attention to hard surface cleaning.

We continue to test our student athletes this spring. There are over 600 student athletes this spring between the high school and middle school. We have administered over 1500 rapid COVID tests. We have just a handful of positive results.

With only six (6) weeks left in our school year, my recommendation is as follows:

That the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve remaining in our current format for all students, grades K-12, providing in-person five-day per week instruction for the hybrid students and virtual instruction for those who selected the virtual modality.

It was moved by Mrs. Murphy and supported by Mrs. Hood that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve the recommendation as presented.

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

Nays: 0 MOTION CARRIED

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

Soccer Pavilion Fiber Cable

IDS worked with the district technology staff and Oakland Schools to determine if it would be beneficial to do the work under the existing maintenance pricing from Amcomm Telecommunications Inc. (Amcomm) or to bid the work through the E-Rate bid process.

The quote from Amcomm through the existing maintenance pricing is \$10,365.

The bid that was received from Fiber Link, Inc.through the E-Rate bid process is \$18, 369.

The district subsequently determined that, due to conduit being run from the press box to the new scoreboard location, it would be possible to run the data fiber for the pavilion from the press box as well. The revised quote from Amcomm for running fiber from the press box is \$4,797.

Please note: this does not include the cost of the conduit, nor the cost of the fiber to the

scoreboard, both of which are provided for under a separate project.

IDS recommends the district approve the project award to Amcomm for \$4,797. IDS also recommends a district-managed contingency of \$500.

This project will be funded from the 2019 Bond.

Building Name – Walsh College Property

With the purchase of the former Walsh College property at 41500 Gardenbrook Rd., the district needed to rename the building. Our board policy 6011 identifies how school district buildings and facilities are named. It states:

Responsibility for suggesting building and facility names to the Board will reside in a joint committee of the Board, the professional staff and citizens. Board representatives and citizens will be appointed by the President of the Board. Staff representatives will be designated by the Superintendent. The joint committee will develop and recommend suitable names to the Board. Buildings and facilities shall not be named after a person.

A committee was developed comprised of three board members, the Superintendent, and two community members.

Several potential names were considered for the building. In a letter to the district parents, ideas were solicited for the building. The committee considered these suggestions along with additional suggestions created by the committee.

Tonight, this committee would like to recommend to the Board that the property at 41500 Gardenbrook Rd. be named <u>The ROAR Center</u>. ROAR is an acronym for Robotics, Online, and Adult Readiness. This name connects the purpose of the building with the Wildcat mascot of the district.

This is presented for information and discussion this evening and will return to the Board for action on May 20, 2021.

Oakland Schools 2021-2022 Budget Resolution

Per the Michigan Revised School Code, Section 380.624(2), the Oakland Schools annual budget must be presented to Oakland County's 28 school districts by May 1 each year. Oakland Schools distributed three sets of the fiscal year 2020-21 proposed budget documents: a set for the Superintendent, Business Manager, and Board Treasurer, Kathy Hood.

Per section 624(2)(b), the following actions are required by the district for compliance:

- 1) Review the Intermediate School District's General Education Fund operating budget.
- 2) Not later than June 1st adopt a board resolution expressing support for or disapproval of the proposed budget.
- 3) Submit to the ISD's board of education any specific objections and proposed changes to said budget.

Per section 624, only the general operating fund budget requires a board resolution. However, the ISD has provided all of their draft budgets: Special Education, Career Focused Education, Special Revenue-Cooperative Activities, Debt Service, Capital Projects, Enterprise and Internal Service, and Grant Funds budgets.

While not a statutory requirement, the Oakland Schools Board of Education held a remote Designates Meeting on Tuesday, April 27, 2021, at 6:00pm, providing local board designates and district administrative staff an opportunity to hear a presentation on the budget and ask questions prior to finalizing a board resolution on or before June 1.

Two resolutions are attached, one supporting the ISD budget and one disapproving it. They are presented to the Board tonight for information and discussion, with adoption of one at the May 20, 2021, regular meeting.

Superintendent Contract

The current contract between the Novi Community School District Board of Education and Superintendent Dr. Steve Matthews was extended in June 2019 for three (3) years commencing on July 1, 2019 through and including June 30, 2022

The 2020-2021 school year was the second year of the contract, and the Superintendent is requesting the following considerations in the contract.

The contract was reviewed and revised by the Superintendent Contract Committee. The following revisions are recommended:

Compensation -

- 1. There are two sections of the current contract that address compensation and they provide conflicting direction to the Board.
 - a. Section 2, Paragraph 2 Salary states:
 - i. The Board of Education hereby retains the right to adjust the annual salary of the Superintendent effective July 1, 2020 and effective each July 1st thereafter.
 - b. Section 14, Evaluation states:
 - i. At least annually, but no later than the last day of December of each year during the term of this contract, . . . upon completion of the formal evaluation, the Board of Education shall consider any salary adjustment
 - c. Issues to consider
 - i. All staff receive compensation increases in July at the end of the current school year and before the new school year begins
 - ii. Salary decisions for 2021-2022 and beyond cannot be made yet because the state budget is unknown.
 - iii. Retirement is based on "average yearly compensation" calculated on the school year calendar
 - d. Recommendation
 - i. Contract language changes:

- 1. Paragraph 2 Salary:
 - a. The Superintendent's salary for fiscal year 2021-2022 shall be determined during the 2021-2022 budget discussions along with other administrator contract salary revisions.
 - b. The Board of Education hereby retains the right to adjust the annual salary of the Superintendent effective July 1, 2021 and effective each July 1st thereafter. Compensation increases would be based on the school year calendar and take effect on July 1.
- 2. Revision to Paragraph 14 Evaluation
 - a. Strike language on salary adjustment to make it consistent with paragraph 2
 - Upon completion of the formal evaluation, the Board of Education shall consider any salary adjustment and/or contract modification/renewal/extension and take formal action on that consideration by no later than ninety (90) days following the completion of the evaluation.
- 3. Add language connecting salary increase to evaluation
 - a. When considering a salary adjustment, the Board of Education will take into consideration the previous Superintendent evaluation. On the most current evaluation, the Superintendent must have earned an effective or highly effective evaluation to receive an increase in compensation.

Annual Terms

- 1. The Superintendent has difficulty taking all of the allotted vacation days. The Superintendent does not get paid for unused vacation days either yearly on at the end of the contract. Vacation has been especially problematic in this pandemic year.
 - a. Contract language change:
 - i. Current language:
 - 1. Superintendent may roll over up to ten (10) days of unused vacation days each year of the contract, not subject to accrual.
 - b. Recommendation:
 - i. Superintendent may roll over up to ten (10) twenty (20) days of unused vacation days each year of the contract, not subject to accrual.

Contract extension

- 2. The current contract is a three-year contract approved in 2019. The Superintendent requested that the contract be extended during discussions with the contract committee. State law allows the Superintendent contract to be five years in length. The following request was made by the Superintendent and discussed in the contract committee:
 - a. Section 1 Term of Contract

i. July 1, 2021 –June 30, 2026

1. 5-year contract

b. State law allows up to a five-year contract

The attached contract comes to the Board for information and discussion at this, the first board meeting in May. The revised contract would be effective from July 1, 2021, up to and including June 30, 2026.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Governance and Policy Committee

Mr. Cook, Board Vice President and Chair of the committee, reported that the committee talked about policies 3004 and 3005. He stated that they talked about moving some of the language from the administrative guidelines over to the policy for more clarification. Mr. Cook said there were a couple of items from the work session that the committee needed to talk about, so we need to schedule another committee meeting for that and to wrap up the policies from the last discussion and take them to the Board.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Dr. Ruskin, Board President and Chair of the committee, reported that they had their first meeting and spent the time talking about the goals and mission statement. She stated that they looked at the Oakland County School Board's DEI mission statement and goals. Dr. Ruskin said the committee discussed the different groups that are currently working throughout the district on diversity, equity, and inclusion. She mentioned that there will be more conversation about the mission and vision of the committee.

Building Naming Committee

Mr. Cook, Board Vice President and Chair of the committee, stated that he had already given a thorough report earlier in the meeting under Information and Discussion, Building Name – Walsh Property.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were no comments from the audience.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Steve Matthews, Superintendent of Schools, mentioned that we only have one (1) camera angle tonight because Mr. LaLonde's presence was required at the high school to help with the dance team.

He reported that the policy committee may be receiving a request from some students at the high school. Dr. Matthews stated that Skye came to our last meeting and talked about a student representative to the Board. He said that he met with Skye and three (3) other students yesterday to listen to their idea. Dr. Matthews mentioned that he suggested to them that it might be good to have a discussion with the policy committee and they may follow up on that. He stated that he told them to follow up with Ms. Holly to see when the next meeting was; they might want to get on the agenda.

Dr. Matthews reported that a survey went out to our community yesterday about the virtual school for this fall. He stated that the intent was that anybody who wanted to participate in the virtual school would complete the survey. He said that the survey will default to an in-person for the fall if parents do not complete it. Dr. Matthews reported that we will reinforce that tomorrow when he sends out his regular Friday communication to the community. He reiterated that the intent is you only complete the survey if you are interested in the virtual option and so far we have over 100 students who have expressed an interest.

Dr. Matthews stated that we asked them to consider the options and have received several questions about what it means. He said the answer is that we are building it and do not have all of the final answers, but we believe that it will be a robust, Novi curriculum taught by Novi teachers with a Novi administrator. Dr. Matthews mentioned that they have until the 14th to complete the survey.

Dr. Matthews reported that the district has to plan and staff and get things in place; this is why we cannot have a later summer due date. He stated that if COVID were to return, then we obviously would have to have the flexibility to change significantly like we did last summer. Dr. Matthews said that we did not approve our return to school plan until August last year and if things deteriorate over the summer, we would have to do the same thing this summer. He mentioned that the hope is that they will not and the in-person option will be the option for the majority of the students in our community.

Dr. Matthews reported that there are a variety of reasons why groups of students and families would like a virtual option, so we are making it available to the Novi Community School District families. He stated that this virtual school will not be open to those who live outside of the NCSD boundaries. Dr. Matthews said that this is a good option for families who have a health compromised family member, or in an exceptional skating, hockey, gymnastics, or other traveling activity. He mentioned that they can get the same high quality education at home working virtually with Novi teachers supporting them.

Dr. Matthews reported that once we have identified those students who are interested, we can begin staffing. He stated that we will communicate this clearly and roll this out throughout the summer, so they will be ready to go when school starts in the fall. Dr. Matthews said that the survey is coming out tomorrow and will come out a couple of times next week, so that we can get as many respondents as possible.

<u>ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS</u>

Mr. Greg McIntyre, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, reported that the house and senate finance committees are making changes to the State Aid Budget as we speak.

Dr. Gary Kinzer, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, reported that this is staff appreciation week and it is only appropriate that we express our appreciation to our staff: teachers, administrators, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, and all of the people who make this school district a special place. He expressed a genuine thank you and is appreciative of all that they do for our students.

Dr. Kinzer thanked the Suburban Collection for their efforts in promoting staff appreciation week. He also thanked the businesses for participating and said that he enjoyed the cookies, the buntini, coffee and muffin, and the list goes on. Dr. Kinzer mentioned that tomorrow is ice cream day. He congratulated Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Mena, and Mrs. Hood for their accomplishments and on the well-earned honor.

Dr. Kinzer reported that our final mentee Monday was a week ago, on the 26th of April. He stated that they had completed their PD series for our first year teachers in the district and it was very successful, all virtual, PD this year. Dr. Kinzer said that moving forward they will continue to include some virtual professional development with a blend of in-person. He mentioned that these first year teachers will never have a more challenging year and they are off to a good start.

Dr. RJ Webber, Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services, reported that the pandemic has brought about some really good things with the NEF and the Suburban Collection and the inclusivity amongst the staff this week in appreciation of them. He stated that perhaps that is something the NEF will consider going forward because of the joy throughout the district to see every teacher posting.

Dr. Webber said that speaking of staff, Emily Pohlonski has been recently named one of the state finalists of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. He mentioned that this is pretty extraordinary.

Dr. Webber reported that he and Emily have been working on a pilot grant application for his stem to create a playbook. He stated that today they received an email that we made it through the first round, which means that the Novi Community School District is now in the running for a ten thousand dollar grant to tell our stem story. Dr. Webber said that we both will get to pitch a 20 minute, shark tank inspired, education experience.

He mentioned that Emily and he will be doing a virtual session for his stem reviewers from across the state. Dr. Webber reported that they will have 10 minutes to pitch and compel with our story and to answer questions. He stated that he will be spending the weekend watching shark tank to get tips and stuff.

Dr. Webber expressed much love and respect to all of our teachers, bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and so on as things open up in the district. He said that he has had the good fortune to be around the district, in buildings, and classrooms. Although he has said this a bunch of times, he wishes that the Board and the world could see the awe-inspiring, jaw-dropping things that our staff does for our kids on a daily basis.

BOARD COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Murphy, Board Trustee, reported that she visited Novi Woods this week on Tuesday and it was really amazing. She stated that she saw some teachers teaching remotely and got to experience a teacher teaching writing, one-on-one, with at student remotely. Mrs. Murphy said that there were other teachers in classrooms and the M-Step kids were there. She mentioned that David Ascher is so positive all of the time and that the teachers in that school seem really happy there and certainly the kids were very happy to be there.

Mrs. Murphy reported that she knew we have not been in the schools nearly as much this year and it was just great to be back in there seeing all the learning and engagement going on amongst the students. She stated that they were all talking about the announcements and Cinco de Mayo and Star Wars because it was May 4th, may the fourth be with you. Mrs. Murphy said that Mr. Ascher does his announcements in front of a green screen and actually does them virtually, too, for the students at home; keeping them connected to everybody, which is really great. She mentioned that they, the schools, are doing a lot and making tremendous efforts to ensure that kids stay connected.

Mrs. Murphy reported that Dave Gulau, who used to help with the Athletic Boosters for many, many years, passed away and his funeral was last Saturday. She stated that he has two (2) students at Novi High School. Mrs. Murphy said that it was sudden and unexpected.

Mrs. Roney, Board Trustee, reported that the high school held their virtual art shows and that one of the students summed up the year perfectly. She stated that her artwork had things that were hung up like keys, sunglasses, some other things, and a mask. Mrs. Roney stated that it was really good and just summed up the year. She said that we have some very, very talented students.

Dr. Ruskin, Board President, reported that there are a lot of athletics going on around town, which is great. She stated that Mr. Mena is the volunteer, slash spectator, slash go to guy, but she has not had the opportunity to attend a track meet yet. Dr. Ruskin said that she has had the opportunity to watch a varsity baseball game. She mentioned that she is a big baseball fan, and really enjoys watching them play. Dr. Ruskin reported that they are really, really talented, so it is fun to watch them play. She stated that the energy of the parents in any sports or fine arts or visual arts is just extremely exciting and having missed an entire year, it really adds to not taking things for granted.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mrs. Murphy and supported by Mrs. Roney 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

Nays: 0 MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for May 20, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., at the Educational Services Building and Live Streamed on YouTube.

Willy Mena,	Secretary

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