



**Minutes of a Regular Meeting, September 9, 2021  
Novi Community School District  
Board of Education**

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A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Novi Community School District was held on Wednesday, September 9, 2021, beginning at 7:00 PM.

Present: Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Smith, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Roney, Mrs. Hood,  
and Mr. Cook (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 Mr. Cook and supported by Mrs. Roney that the Novi Board of Education approve the agenda as amended (omitting the Closed Session).

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

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

**COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCERELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no comments from the audience related to agenda items.

**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 August 25, 2021
  - b. Regular Meeting Minutes of September 1, 2021

It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Mena that the Novi Community Schools Board of Education approve the Consent Item(s) as presented.

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

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>
Marion, Catherine	HS	ELA Teacher	New Hire	BA	TBD
Watkins, Amy	HS	ELA Teacher	New Hire	MA+30	TBD
Hantz, Kelli	ECEC	PS Teacher Site Sub	New Hire	Hourly	09-13-21
Hodorogea, Severina	Adult Ed	ESL Teacher	New Hire	Hourly	09-13-21

**B. Retirements and Resignations**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Keblaitis, Kristin	PV	Special Ed Para	Resigned	09-02-21

**C. Leaves of Absence**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
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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. Smith, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Roney, Mrs. Hood, and Mr. Cook

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

2021-2022 Board Meeting Schedule

On January 7, 2021, at the Board’s Organizational Meeting, the Board approved the 2021 meeting schedule. A tentative 2021-22 Board of Education Meeting schedule was presented at the August 12 board meeting for review and discussion for District planning and facilities scheduling purposes.

This updated meeting schedule comes back tonight for Board approval.

These meetings will be held at the Educational Services Building, located at 25345 Taft Road, Novi Michigan 48374. The tentative schedule includes proposed dates for the Board Workshops.

It was moved by Mrs. Roney and supported by Mrs. Murphy that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approve the 2021-22 Board meeting schedule as presented.

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

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

OCSBA Resolutions and Bylaws

Each year, the OCSBA Resolutions and Bylaws Committee reviews our bylaws and recommends amendments to the Board of Directors and Member Districts. This year, OCSBA found that our bylaws placed restrictions the way that we conducted our business during the pandemic. Several of the proposed amendments address those restrictions during any declared local, state or national emergency.

The Board of Directors has reviewed the proposed amendments, and approves moving these

recommendations forward for a vote of our Member Districts. In accordance with our bylaws, each Member District Board of Education has one (1) vote to approve the recommended amendments.

The Board's completed and signed ballots must be received no later than 5:00 PM on Friday, September 10, 2021, so this comes for Board action tonight. Ballots that are received by the deadline will be acknowledged by email reply (please allow up to 24 hours).

There are four attachments to this message:

- Summary of the proposed revisions with a rationale for each proposed amendment
- Bylaws - the complete document showing all of the proposed changes
- Ballot for the District's vote on the 2021 bylaws amendments
- Ballot for the District's vote on the 2021 resolutions

It was moved by Mrs. Hood and supported by Mrs. Murphy that the Novi Community School District Board of Education approves all OCSBA bylaws amendments and resolutions as presented.

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

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

##### 2021 M-STEP/iReady Results

On August 31, 2021, the Michigan Department of Education released M-STEP results from the spring assessment period.

In addition, the district assessed K-6 students using iReady three times over the course of the 2020-2021 school year.

Tonight, the Superintendent reviewed this data with the Board of Education.

#### COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were three (3) comments from the audience this evening. Two (2) regarding DEI and one (1) regarding politics.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Steve Matthews, Superintendent of Schools, reported that 2021-22 school year officially began this week. He stated that the District was providing two (2) options this fall; our in-person, five days a week and out virtual learning option. Dr. Matthews said that there are over 300 students participating in the virtual option. He mentioned that our students had wonderful experiences this week.

Dr. Matthews reported that he had been in every building this week and saw teachers teaching, students learning, and lots of bright eyes, which means they are smiling underneath their masks.

Dr. Matthews stated we have expanded the elementary and middle school walk zones this year. He said that it has resulted in more cars that pick up and drop off and we are working our way

through this each day. He mentioned that buses have been running late at times due to the traffic delays as they approach the schools with the increase in cars lined up.

Dr. Matthews reported that Our bus drivers who were employed last year have returned to us, but we could use a few more drivers. He stated that we are still recruiting and providing training and support drivers. Dr. Matthews said that the drivers are the first district employee that many students see each day, so they are so important to our District. He mentioned that if anyone would like a great job with flexible hours, we would encourage you to please apply.

Dr. Matthews reported that our construction projects continue throughout the District and most are not complete due to a conflux of bad weather and supply chain issues. He stated that our construction team has done a wonderful job navigating through some difficult circumstances. Dr. Matthews said the new spaces at Village Oaks, Orchard Hills, and the middle school provide great spaces for our students and staff and we have plans in place to continue our work. He mentioned that we believe learning will not be disrupted because of construction this year.

Dr. Matthews reported that on September 27 at 6:30 PM, at the Novi Public Library, our Parent-to-Parent book club begins. He stated that our first book is 14 Talks by Age 14 and is available at the information desk on the first floor, in the Novi Library. Dr. Matthews said that if you are interested in participating, you can come and pick up a book there and join us at the library on Monday, September 27, at 6:30 PM.

Dr. Matthew expressed his appreciation to our staff and Novi families. He stated that this week has gone well, in large part, because of the commitment of our staff and the support and commitment of our families.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Dr. Gary Kinzer, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, reported that there are many people that he could recognize for providing amazing service, but there were a couple who stood out in the last couple of weeks. He recognized Agnes Arbuckle and the McCarthy Smith construction team. He stated that the work they have done at the ROAR Center, Village Oaks, Orchard Hills, the middle school and the work they continue to do on the kindergarten classrooms at Village Oaks and the high school editions is really just impressive, outstanding work. Dr. Kinzer said the progress in two weeks has been just amazing. He mentioned that the work will continue throughout the school year.

Dr. Kinzer also recognized Anthony Locricchio, our senior tech coordinator. He reported that with all of the construction comes a lot of technology and he has worked many, many hours to make sure that we are up to speed. Dr. Kinzer stated that he has plenty of work to continue and has done an exceptional job.

Dr. Kinzer further recognized Mike Dragoo and his team for getting the buildings ready; Cindy Valentine for coordinating the bus runs, and Jeff Dinkelman for all of the work he has done helping the District transition to PowerSchool. He expressed his gratitude to the teachers, administrators, secretaries, bus drivers, parents, and community for helping us get off to a great start.

## BOARD COMMUNICATION

Mr. Smith, Board Trustee, stated that he would like to add NATC and the ROAR Center to the building assignments; we would have to double up on buildings. He reported that he was curious to see how the building would evolve and look like. Mr. Smith said that he was there the Thursday before Labor Day weekend and toured the entire facility and commented that if someone had said classes start October 1<sup>st</sup>, then there would be a lot of work to do. He mentioned that he stopped by on Tuesday morning to see how it was coming together and was just floored.

Mr. Smith reported that it was truly a testament to Agnes, the McCarthy Smith team, and all of the laborers. He stated that apparently they worked tirelessly through the entire Labor Day weekend. Mr. Smith said that there were 14-15 kids along with teachers in the Adult Transition Center and they were actively going at nine o'clock. He mentioned that it was beautiful and wanted to compliment the team.

Mr. Smith reported that he had visited Village Oaks a couple of times during the summer. He stated there are a ton of projects and our supporting team did a fantastic job of getting those buildings ready to open.

Mr. Smith said that we have work to do around Taft and ten mile in the mornings and afternoons. He mentioned that the traffic patterns should thin out.

Mr. Smith complimented Dr. Jordan, at the high school. He stated that he was picking up his student for an appointment and mentioned that sometimes he gets a little impatient. Mr. Smith said that he was out in front of the building waiting and 10-15 minutes went by and he was becoming frustrated, so he parked, went into the building, went through security, made it to the attendance office where they are helping other students, and he was like a bull in the china house. He mentioned that he ran into Dr. Jordan and within 30 minutes he was at his appointment with his kiddo.

Mr. Smith reported that his phone rang and it was Dr. Jordan and he immediately had to make amends and thank her. He stated that Dr. Jordan just wanted to make sure everything was okay and was seeking to understand how to make things better. Mr. Smith said that she went above and beyond what he would have expected, so he just wanted to compliment her. He mentioned that we are pretty fortunate and he just wanted to thank everyone for the work that they do and he will be more patient in the future.

Mrs. Hood, Board Treasurer, reported that the marching band is having their can and bottle drive this Saturday from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. She stated to just put your returnables at the curb with a sign and if nobody picks it up, please take it to the high school.

Mrs. Hood said that Novi Woods is her school this semester, so she stopped by on Wednesday after the meeting. She mentioned that Mr. Ascher gave her a preschool tour of a really lovely facility. Mrs. Hood reported that the teachers had their room set up with the new furniture. She stated that Mr. Ascher showed her how teachers were experimenting with the furniture and with different designs, facing forward, or set up where the kids are far enough apart. Mrs. Hood mentioned that they also have a flower garden, that was sponsored by the NEF. She, also

reported that they have a hammock garden, which DTE showed up with their big truck to sink he poles for the hammocks. Mrs. Hood stated that the hammocks was a wonderful idea and the kids really love it. She said that she did not get to meet Ruthie, the therapy dog, but Dr. Matthews tweeted out pictures of all the District therapy dogs on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Hood mentioned that Mr. Ascher is such a gem for our District and quoted him by saying, "The first day of a school year is filled with growth, support, gratitude, grace, and teamwork." She stated that she is hopeful that comes to fruition for us.

Mr. Cook, Board Vice President, reported that as a first time dad at the high school, he was very disappointed with the amount of communication that came out beforehand, which could have alleviated some of the traffic concerns. He stated that parents were turning in every single drive that they could get in, filling those areas up and blocking buses. Mr. Cook said that he spent probably 15-20 minutes trying to explain to his wife where the pick-up and drop off was for the high school. He mentioned that the middle school, even though there were a lot of cars running down into eleven mile, they were moving them in and out and getting them through. Mr. Cook reported that it was because Mr. Baker has been so diligent in his communication with parents.

Mr. Cook stated that he was glad we were off to another school year. He said that he would like the Board to get a tour of the ROAR Center or have work session there. Mr. Cook said that the ROAR Center has come together so far and is new to everybody.

Mrs. Roney, Board Trustee, reminded everyone that TasteFest is September 17<sup>th</sup>, at the high school, and please bring your pocket book. She stated that this year they are having food trucks. Mrs. Roney said that they will be outside of the stadium, so if you cannot make the game but would like to support the boosters, the food trucks will be your opportunity.

She mentioned that this will be the introduction of the NATC Mobile Market, which is their new food truck. Mrs. Roney reported that this is another new opportunity that will be debuted that evening. She stated that the Cat Rack will also be there.

Mr. Mena, Board Secretary, reported that Robbie Heil will be taking pictures of fans in the stadium, at the next football game. He stated that we will bring a dozen or so of them up at halftime and play them on the scoreboard. Mr. Mena said that if you are lucky, you can get up on the scoreboard. He mentioned that this is the first week and it is experimental, but they are hoping it works out well and folks enjoy it. Mr. Mena reported that coincidentally, this is the anniversary of the touchdown.

#### 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. Smith, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Roney, Mrs. Hood,  
and Mr. Cook

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for September 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., at the Educational Services Building.

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Willy Mena, Secretary

An online recording of this meeting is available on YouTube and on the District Website: [novi.k12.mi.us](https://novi.k12.mi.us)