



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

Present: Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Cook, Mr. Smith, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Roney, and Mrs. Hood (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 Mr. Smith by that the Novi Board of Education approve the agenda.

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

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

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 November 4, 2021
- B. Approval of Field Trip(s)
 - a. University of Michigan Model U.N.
- C. Approval of Donation(s)
 - a. Japanese School of Detroit – Laptop Donation

It was moved by Mrs. Roney and supported by Mrs. Murphy that the Novi Community Schools Board of Education approve the Consent Item(s) as presented.

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

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

ACTION ITEMS

2021 Winter Tax Levy

At the September 23, 2021 regular Board meeting, the Novi Board of Education formally certified the revised 2021-22 tax levies as listed below:

HOMESTEAD	<u>Mills</u>
<u>Levy Description</u>	
General Operating Mills (Hold Harmless-Supp.)	1.2754
Sinking Fund Mills	0.4713
Recreational Mills	0.9365
Debt Mills	<u>6.5000</u>
Total	9.1832
INDUSTRIAL-PERSONAL	
<u>Levy Description</u>	
General Operating Mills (Hold Harmless-Supp.)	1.2754
Sinking Fund Mills	0.4713
Recreational Mills	0.9365
Debt Mills	<u>6.5000</u>
Total	9.1832
COMMERCIAL-PERSONAL	
<u>Levy Description</u>	
General Operating Mills	5.2473
General Operating Mills (Hold Harmless-Supp.)	1.2754
Sinking Fund Mills	0.4713
Recreational Mills	0.9365
Debt Mills	<u>6.5000</u>
Total	14.4305
NON-HOMESTEAD	
<u>Levy Description</u>	
General Operating Mills	17.2473
Sinking Fund Mills	0.4713
Recreational Mills	0.9365
Debt Mills	<u>6.5000</u>
Total	25.1551

50% of the taxes in the summer and 50% in the winter. Thus, the 2021 winter tax levy is:

HOMESTEAD	<u>Mills</u>
<u>Levy Description</u>	
General Operating Mills (Hold Harmless-Supp.)	0.0657
Sinking Fund Mills	0.2356
Recreational Mills	0.4682
Debt Mills	<u>3.2500</u>
Total	4.0195
INDUSTRIAL-PERSONAL	
<u>Levy Description</u>	

General Operating Mills (Hold Harmless-Supp.)	0.0657
Sinking Fund Mills	0.2356
Recreational Mills	0.4682
Debt Mills	<u>3.2500</u>
Total	4.0195

COMMERCIAL-PERSONAL

<u>Levy Description</u>	
General Operating Mills (Hold Harmless)	2.6237
General Operating Mills (Hold Harmless-Supp.)	0.0657
Sinking Fund Mills	0.2356
Recreational Mills	0.4682
Debt Mills	<u>3.2500</u>
Total	6.6432

NON-HOMESTEAD

<u>Levy Description</u>	
General Operating Mills (Hold Harmless)	8.6236
Sinking Fund Mills	0.2356
Recreational Mills	0.4682
Debt Mills	<u>3.2500</u>
Total	12.5774

It was moved by Mr. Cook and supported by Mr. Mena that the Novi Community School District Board of Education, in the best interest of the school district, authorize the winter (December 2021) tax levy as listed above.

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

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

On September 9, 2021, the Board approved the 2021-2022 revised meeting schedule that included the rest of the 2021-2022 school year. A schedule conflict has appeared for June 2, 2021. That is the same date as the Novi High School Commencement Ceremony at EMU.

It is being recommended that June 2, 2021 be rescheduled for June 9, 2021.

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

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were three (3) comments from the audience this evening. One was regarding masks; one was regarding supplementing education. in schools; and one was an expression of gratitude for 10 years of the Japanese School of Detroit Partnership.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Dr. Steve Matthews, Superintendent of Schools, expressed his appreciation and thanks to the athletic department for hosting the MHSAA events in November. He reported that we hosted the

boys' soccer championship games earlier this month and will be hosting a football semifinal this coming Saturday. Dr. Matthew stated that he appreciated the hard work of the Novi Athletic Department and the way they make our Novi Community School District shine, during those moments.

Dr. Matthews reported that the work on our bond projects continues. He stated that the high school west wing office project is progressing and that we anticipate the work will continue through December and into January. Dr. Matthews said that our meadows project continues to wait for permitting, at this point, although the permitting from the city has been approved, we are now waiting on permitting from the state and the county.

Dr. Matthews mentioned that the bond projects at Orchard Hills and Village Oaks are finalizing their punch lists. He reported that the space in these buildings looks wonderful and we will be sure to give the Board a preview or an overview of that as we move forward.

Dr. Matthews wished everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving break. He stated that we have much to be thankful for, here in our school district. Dr. Matthews said that he believes that our break will be well received next week.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Dr. Gary Kinzer, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, extended his gratitude to Sheila McDonnell, our benefits manager. He reported that we just concluded a very successful, open enrollment period. Dr. Kinzer stated that open enrollment occurs each fall and it is the time when all of our employees select insurance and other benefit options; a pretty comprehensive menu of choices.

Dr. Kinzer said that it is a pretty robust process and goes very smoothly because of Sheila's preparation and the attention she provides to members who are asking question in advance. He mentioned that all of our employees are able to make the best possible choices, so thank you to the business office and to Sheila McDonnell.

Dr. RJ Webber, Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services, expressed his thanks, in Japanese (Arigatogozaimasu) to Mr. Itaru Inoue, General Manager of the Japanese School of Detroit, for a decade of working beside him. He reported that it has been a pleasure and what he had done for the community, in the City of Novi, is astounding.

Dr. Webber stated that yesterday he had the privileged to find out that our student academic numbers are up by 48 students, so we are attracting students while other districts are shedding students. He said that a big part of that is Mr. Inoue's commitment to the Ringo Kai High School here on Saturdays. Dr. Webber mentioned that in our community one third of our students are of Japanese descent and, as such, have played a pivotal role in helping this community welcome more families. He stated that Mr. Inoue will be deeply missed.

Dr. Webber sincerely hoped that he returns to Kobe and that it is good for him, to see his family and friends as well. He said that this was obviously a mission and that ten years is a long time to be away from home. Dr. Webber expressed his gratitude. He mentioned that Bob Steeh and

Alice Smith had the initial conversations when he was in Birmingham and convinced the Japanese School to come take a look at Novi.

Dr. Webber reported that if we think about the English language learners, one third of our community fits that designation and if you think about the pandemic and what we have been through, imagine the life of an English language learner who is confined to home and away from friends, away from their family. He stated that the way you learn language is immersion, by being in school and around people.

Dr. Webber said that if you think about why we put the resources, things like social workers, social emotional learning aspects to really service our students. He mentioned that Mr. Inoue and his team have done great work, striving to build those connections with those families and we thank them for that.

Dr. Webber reported that last week he had the privilege of attending the Novi Community Coalition's yearly report and dinner, held at Tollgate Farm. He stated that Ms. Julie Farkas was there as well and it was great to see her.

Dr. Webber said that on Saturday, at Novi Middle School, we had our robotics competition for the first time in over two years. He mentioned there were 32 teams from around the state and it was the tech challenge. Dr. Webber reported that it was a joy to see the students competing again and connecting with each other.

Dr. Webber stated that Thanksgiving is coming and it is very important for him to be grateful for everyone in this community who had banded together to support our students and to support the adults who need it as well. He said to say the past two years has been challenging, would be an understatement and he is so incredibly proud of the people who serve this community school district every day that our kids are here with us.

Dr. Webber mentioned that he sees the kids regulated, learning, achieving, connecting, and most importantly, hearing them laugh. He reported that there is nothing like it. Dr. Webber stated that to create an environment where our students are loved and cared for and seen as human beings, is really a privilege to be here and he is thankful for that.

BOARD COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Murphy, Board Trustee, reported that she had the pleasure, along with Dr. Matthews, of going on the eighth grade field trip. She stated that this year she was fortunate to have a wonderful group of girls, two of whom were daughters of teachers that her kids had, so that was fun. Mrs. Murphy said that it was a great trip even though the capitol was closed. She mentioned that there were a few other places like the spy museum, which was an excellent place to go and the kids loved it.

Mrs. Murphy reported that nobody got sick and there was not a lot of traffic, which allowed them to get places much faster and get through security quicker. She stated that overall it was probably the best trip she had ever been on, and she has been on eight. Mrs. Murphy said that the students

were just fabulous and respectful. She mentioned that they got nice compliments for people, when there were out and about, and for the most part it was just really enjoyable.

Mrs. Murphy stated that she just loves that our teachers take such great care of the students when they are away from home. She said that some of them are away from their family for the first time and the teachers are just so nurturing. Mrs. Murphy mentioned that it was great to see them in an element other than that of being an instructor.

Mr. Mena, Board Secretary, reported that he will be volunteering at the state semifinals football games this weekend. He stated that he always looks forward to that event. Mr. Mena said that he was also looking forward to the new basketball season, which will be coming up shortly.

Mr. Mena reminded the Board that there are a lot of issues that he thinks the Board should start talking about and addressing in the near future. He mentioned that we were struggling with some bus shortage issues and he would like some more insight. Mr. Mena stated that maybe with our collective minds we can see if there are some additional creative ideas that we can come up with to resolve the bus shortage, he meant driver shortage.

Mr. Mena said that his understanding is that we have some type of struggle with substitute teachers and from what he is hearing that seems to be an issue. He mentioned that he would like a better understanding on that and what we are doing and how we compare to other districts. What are we paying folks, our subs, through EduStaff?

Mr. Mena stated that there are a lot of issues that are still pen with regards to curriculum and professional development and questions about general transparency. He said that there are issues with EnviroClean and he would like to, at some point when the time is right, to have some discussions there. Mr. Mena mentioned that there are some issues with grants and gift approvals as well as social media usage. He said maybe if there is another meeting that is short, the Board could have a closed session and start looking at lists like this and then add them to the agenda to start having those discussions publicly. It was stated that some of those things need to be addressed at the policy committee.

Mr. Cook, Board Vice-President, reported that he had the privilege of going to some middle school basketball games, so winter sports is off and running. He stated that the kids, without much practice, seem to be doing very well, gelling together. Mr. Cook said they seem to be off to a good start and the attendance was very nice for a Monday night. He mentioned that when he got there, the stands were probably half full, so that was good for a middle school game. Mr. Cook wished them luck for the rest of the season.

Mrs. Hood, Board Treasurer, reported that last Saturday was the marching band state finals and Novi's performance was lovely. She stated that they came in fifth, which was expected. Mrs. Hood said that Rockford won this year. She mentioned that Rockford had 210 kids on the field and it was incredible. Mrs. Hood stated that she does not know, but she thinks of the southeast Michigan schools as being more committed to Marshall.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Mr. Mena and supported by Mrs. Murphy the Novi Community School District Board of Education move into a Closed Session to discuss District land.

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

Nays: 0

The Board moved into a Closed Session at 7:38 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for December 2, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., at the Educational Services Building.

Willy Mena, Secretary

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