

MINNETONKA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #276
District Service Center
5621 County Road 101
Minnetonka, Minnesota

Minutes of December 2, 2021 Regular Board Meeting

The School Board of Minnetonka Independent School District #276 met in regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 2, 2021 in the Community Room at the District Service Center, 5621 County Road 101, Minnetonka, Minnesota. Chairperson Chris Vitale presided. Other Board members present were: Mark Ambrosen, Katie Becker, John Holcomb and Superintendent Dennis Peterson, ex officio. Absent: Mike LeSage, John Odom and Lisa Wagner. The meeting was also livestreamed on the District's YouTube channel.

Prior to the meeting, the Board recognized, via a video, the AP Scholars with Honor; Girls Tennis State Champions; Boys Cross Country State Qualifiers; Girls Cross Country State Qualifiers; Girls Swimming and Diving State Champions; Marching Band State Qualifiers; Miss Preteen Minnesota 2021; and "The MCE Minute" Award recipients.

Also prior to the regular meeting, the Board held its annual Truth-in-Taxation Hearing. Superintendent Peterson said that this time was set aside to provide information to District residents and that the Board would take action on the levy as part of that evening's regular meeting agenda. He called upon Paul Bourgeois, Executive Director of Finance and Operations, to present the information to the Board.

By way of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Bourgeois reviewed the requirements for the public hearing. "State law requires that we present information on the current year budget and actual revenue and expenses for the prior year; that we present information on the proposed property tax levy; the percentage change over the prior year, if any; the specific purposes and reasons for which taxes are being increased; and that the District allow time for public comments," he said.

Mr. Bourgeois explained that school funding is highly regulated by the State, and the State sets formulas which determine revenue. Most revenue is based on specified amounts per pupil. The State also sets tax policy for local schools, and sets the maximum authorized property tax levy (districts can levy less but not more than the amount authorized by the state, unless approved by the voters). The State authorizes school boards to submit referendums for operating and capital needs to the voters for approval. Mr. Bourgeois noted that state funding for schools has not kept pace with inflation, and increases in basic general education revenue per pupil have also been less than inflation.

Mr. Bourgeois then shared information on the District's nine funds: General; Food Service; Community Service; Capital Projects/Construction; Debt Service; Trust; Internal Service; OPEB Trust Fund and OPEB Debt Service, and explained how the County collects taxes from property owners and distributes the funds back to other taxing

jurisdictions. He said that each school district may levy taxes in over 40 different categories, and levy limits (maximum levy amounts) for each category are set either by state law or voter approval. MDE calculates detailed levy limits for each district.

Mr. Bourgeois then summarized the key steps in the School District property tax process as well as the schedule to be followed in approving the proposed levy. He then gave an overview of the proposed levy, noting that the amount being recommended for final certification is \$56,474,858.27, which is an increase of \$1,229,500.01 or 2.23% over the prior year amount of \$55,245,358.26. Certification of this levy amount will set this amount as the amount that the School Board will levy for the 2021 Payable 2022 levy. He also shared information on what the approximate tax impact would be on a \$300,000 home, a \$500,000 home, a \$700,000 home, and a \$900,000 home in Minnetonka. Factors impacting individual taxpayers' school taxes include: changes in the value of individual property; changes in the total value of all property in the District; and increases or decreases in levy amounts caused by changes in state funding formulas, local needs and costs, voter-approved referendums, and other factors.

Chairperson Vitale thanked Mr. Bourgeois for his presentation and invited members of the audience to make comments regarding the proposed levy. No one responded to this invitation to speak. Chairperson Vitale then closed the public hearing, called the regular meeting to order and asked that everyone stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

1. **AGENDA**

Ambrosen moved, Holcomb seconded, that the School Board approve the agenda as presented. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

2. **SCHOOL REPORT: MMW**

MMW Principal Freya Schirmacher provided an update regarding the start of the 2021-22 school year at MMW, focusing on Excellence in Well-being and Belonging and the MTSS process at MMW. She also shared information about the MMW Core Values in Action as well as a review of the Blue Ribbon School of Excellence Award process and celebration.

Board member Holcomb thanked Ms. Schirmacher and her staff and congratulated them on the National Blue Ribbon designation, and he said he appreciated the guiding principles she leads with at MMW. Board member Becker congratulated Ms. Schirmacher on the Blue Ribbon School designation. She and Chairperson Vitale both mentioned they attended the MMW Blue Ribbon celebration, that it was well done and that the student speakers were outstanding.

3. **COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

Chairperson Vitale noted that this opportunity for comment was available to community members who wished to address the Board on any item on that night's agenda. He also read the guidelines for Community Comments, for the benefit of those who wished to speak.

The following individuals then addressed the Board:

- Chanhassen resident Susanne Schaer spoke against COVID vaccinations for young children
- Excelsior resident Nicole Nejezchleba spoke in support of mask exemptions for children in special education
- Victoria resident Sarah Esch spoke in support of mask choice
- Excelsior resident Kathryn Bonine spoke in support of mask choice
- Chanhassen resident Jessica Cossalter spoke in support of mask choice
- Minnetrista resident Megan Befort spoke in support of mask choice
- Chanhassen resident Faith Staut spoke in support of mask choice
- Minnetonka resident Alan Arlt spoke in support of mask choice
- Excelsior resident Kelly DeWane spoke in support of mask choice
- Excelsior resident Chad Herman questioned the district's data regarding COVID numbers

Chairperson Vitale thanked the community members for their comments.

4. **REVIEW OF FY21 AUDIT**

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Paul Bourgeois noted that the audit of the Fiscal Year 2021 Financial Statements has been completed by the auditing firm of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP and is being readied for acceptance and approval by the School Board at the December 16, 2021 Special School Board Meeting. He introduced Michelle Hoffman of CliftonLarsonAllen, who reviewed the Basic Financial Statements in the audit for the Board, prior to final approval of the complete audit report which will be on December 16. Upon approval, the audited financial statements will be filed with the Minnesota Department of Education as required by statute. The District will be receiving an unmodified opinion from CliftonLarsonAllen, which means the financial statements present fairly the financial position of the District on June 30, 2021.

Board member Holcomb said the Citizen's Finance and Audit Committee had reviewed the audit at their last meeting. They called out the success of the District navigating the pandemic and the things the District has done over the years to put itself in a strong financial position. He also said it is important that the District has a healthy fund balance, and commended Administration for making sure that was so.

Chairperson Vitale noted that the audit would be brought back to the December 16 special meeting for approval.

5. ADOPTION OF 2021 PAYABLE 2022 LEVY

Mr. Bourgeois noted that Minnesota Statutes require that each school district certify a final property tax levy by December 30, 2021 for property taxes to be collected in calendar year 2022. The 2021 Payable 2022 Levy being presented for Certification by the School Board is \$56,474,858.27, which is an increase of \$1,229,500.01 or 2.23% over the prior year amount of \$55,245,358.26. A school district can always lower the Final Levy Certification from the amount of the Preliminary Levy Certification, but can never increase it from the Preliminary Levy Certification unless there is a voter-approved referendum for facilities, capital projects, or operations. Certification of this levy amount will set this amount as the amount that the School Board will levy for the 2021 Pay 2022 levy.

Mr. Bourgeois recommended that the School Board certify the 2021 Payable 2022 Levy in the amount of \$56,474,858.27 and authorize administration to file the Certified 2021 Payable 2022 Levy with the Hennepin County Auditor, Carver County Auditor, and Minnesota Department of Education no later than December 30, 2021.

Holcomb moved, Ambrosen seconded, that the Board approve the following motion:

Resolution to Certify 2021 Pay 2022 Property Tax Levy

BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board of Minnetonka Independent School District 276 does hereby certify the 2021 Pay 2022 Property Tax Levy in the amount of \$56,474,858.27, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Deputy Clerk of Minnetonka Independent School District 276 is hereby directed to deliver a signed original of the 2021 Payable 2022 Levy Certification to the County Auditors of Hennepin and Carver Counties prior to December 30, 2021 and deliver a copy to the Minnesota Department of Education Program Finance Division no later than December 30, 2021.

Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

6. APPROVAL OF MCE FEES

Executive Director for Minnetonka Community Education Tim Litfin and Coordinator of Youth and Adult Programs Jenny Bodurka presented the program data, registration and fee proposal information for ECFE (5.5% fee increase proposed), Minnetonka Preschool (5.5% increase proposed) and the Explorers childcare program (4% increase proposed) for the 2022-23 school year. Board member Becker said she's impressed with the program and how they listen to parents' requests and needs. She is also happy to see the sliding fee scale isn't changing, which helps families afford

programming. Vice Chair Ambrosen said the fee changes to ECFE and Minnetonka Preschool have been small over time and that he appreciates the cost to families has been kept down. Board member Becker asked whether the MCE PTO is supportive of the increases, and Mr. Litfin said that they are. Board member Holcomb asked about wage levels and how we are attracting and retaining staff. Mr. Litfin said there was a slight increase in compensation this year and there will be another slight increase next year. Chairperson Vitale thanked Mr. Litfin and his staff. He also called out that we are offering a premiere program and that the increases are reasonable.

Becker moved, Holcomb seconded, that the Board approve the 5.5% fee increase proposal for Minnetonka ECFE for 2022-23. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

Ambrosen moved, Holcomb seconded, that the Board approve the 5.5% fee increase for Minnetonka Preschool for 2022-23. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

Ambrosen moved, Holcomb seconded, that the Board approve the 4% fee increase for Explorers for 2022-23, and the K-5 Explorers registration fee increase from \$75 to \$100 for 2022-23. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

7. **APPROVAL OF NEW COURSE PROPOSALS, CHANGES AND DELETIONS**

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Dr. Amy LaDue presented this item to the Board. She explained that all new course proposals and revisions for 2022-23 have been reviewed by department chairs, building administration, district administration, and the Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee.

New Course Proposals

Course Title	Grade(s)
Automotive Braking Systems	10-12
Automotive Career Investigation	9-12
Automotive Electrical/Electronic Systems	10-12
Automotive Engine Performance	10-12
Automotive Steering and Suspension Systems	10-12
CIS College Algebra	11-12
Disability Studies	11-12
Engineering Design and Development	12
Forensic Science	11-12
Mathematics of Home Renovation/Home Renovation and Applied Mathematics	11-12
Metal Sculpture 2	9-12
The Geology and Biomes of US Parks and Forests	10-12

VANTAGE Education	11-12
Virtual Enterprise	11-12

Course Removal List

Each year courses that have not reached the minimum student enrollment for three years in a row, or that have been replaced by new courses, are removed from the *Skipper Log*. AP Physics 1 (AP 316 and AP 318) will not be included in the 2022-23 *Skipper Log*. Building and District administration will continue to monitor courses that have not run for subsequent years.

Course Title Changes

Proposed Title	Current Title
Automotive Investigation	Auto 1
Unified PE	Integrated PE
TO Personal and Family Relationships	TO Relationships
Textiles & Applied Design	Quilting

Becker moved, Ambrosen seconded, that the Board approve the list of new course proposals, changes and deletions. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

8. REVIEW OF SAFE LEARNING PLAN

The Board reviewed the District’s Safe Learning Plan to consider whether any changes are needed. Superintendent Peterson introduced this item and corrected something inaccurate that a community member had said during Community Comments regarding COVID data that the District has presented to the School Board in the past. Director of Health Services Annie Lumbar Bendson presented an update on COVID cases, vaccination rates at MHS, the middle schools and the elementary schools and showed how the District’s COVID case count compares to neighboring districts. Vice Chair Ambrosen said the data the District has presented regarding COVID has never felt disingenuous, affirming what Dr. Peterson said earlier about the community member’s comment being untrue. Board member Holcomb asked about universal masking and how that works at the high school vs at the middle schools. Ms. Lumbar Bendson confirmed that at the high school, as there is not universal masking, some students have experienced more than one quarantine, whereas at the middle schools the universal masking lessens the frequency of the requirement of quarantine.

With regard to vaccination rates, Dr. Peterson said that the middle school vaccination rate is approaching the percentage that the high school was at when the School Board made the decision to have masks strongly recommended and not required for the high school, and Chairperson Vitale agreed. Mr. Vitale said he thinks he would be comfortable discussing at the January School Board meeting whether a change to the

mask mandate could be made to the middle schools if the vaccination rate continues to grow. The Board discussed whether the winter break will have an impact on numbers increasing once students and staff return from break. Ultimately, the Board made the decision that based on the data they have now, in addition to reviewing the Safe Learning Plan at the January 6 regular meeting, the Board will also consider bringing a motion at that meeting to make a change to the mask mandate at the middle schools.

9. **REVIEW OF SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PROCESS**

Board member Becker provided an update to the Board and community on the superintendent search process. She said that a Board subcommittee consisting of herself, Board member Odom and Board member Wagner had been formed to aid in the process of the search. A search firm will be selected to lead the process, and six firms have submitted proposals to the Board. The subcommittee will meet in the coming days to narrow the list of firms down to four, and the full Board will then meet on December 9 in study session to hear presentations from the four finalists. The District has also launched a Superintendent Search web page (accessible through the main District website) in order to keep the community fully informed throughout the process.

Chairperson Vitale noted that Dr. Peterson's retirement announcement had been quite the surprise and that he was not quite ready to put into words just how much he, the Board and the community truly appreciate everything Dr. Peterson has done for the District. Chairperson Vitale said he would work on those words for a later time.

10. **APPROVAL OF CHANGE OF ATTENDANCE BOUNDARY FOR EXCELSIOR AND MINNEWASHTA**

Dr. Peterson noted that the proposal to shift the boundary between Minnewashta and Excelsior elementary schools is based on the limitations for additional students at Minnewashta, some available space at Excelsior and the potential for new elementary students living in the new Carrick apartment/townhome complex in Tonka Bay. The change would include the Carrick property, the commercial properties next to the apartments and all residential property on Lawtonka Drive, Timber Lane and Shorewood Lane. This change should be implemented immediately. Any current Minnewashta student will be allowed to remain there, and any sibling of a Minnewashta student who is not yet in school will be allowed to attend Minnewashta also.

Holcomb moved, Becker seconded, that the Board approve the recommended boundary change as presented. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

11. ADOPTION OF POLICY #709: STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Mr. Bourgeois presented this item to the Board. He noted that at a previous Study Session, he had presented the clarifications regarding the contracting out of several of the items in the policy to the District's contracted vendor for student transportation. These clarifications reflect the actual practices for bus driver training, licensing, and ongoing safety training as all buses are driven by the employees of the contracted vendor.

Ambrosen moved, Holcomb seconded, that the Board approve Policy #307: Student Transportation Safety, as presented. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

12. ACCEPTANCE OF BID FOR ALTERATIONS OF TECH ED ROOM AT MMW

Mr. Bourgeois began by noting that in Summer 2020, the District completed alterations to the Tech Ed room at Minnetonka Middle School East (MME) to better utilize underutilized space. The Tech Ed room was divided into an approximately 1,100 square foot Tech Ed room and an approximately 800 square foot classroom space, providing a net gain of one classroom space for MME, which had grown to 1,300 students.

In FY2021, Minnetonka Middle School West (MMW) has also grown to 1,300 students. The original Tech Ed area is identical to the original Tech Ed areas at MME. At this time, it is prudent to capture underutilized space in the Tech Ed room at MMW by dividing it into an approximately 1,100 square foot Tech Ed room and an approximately 800 square foot classroom to provide MMW with a net gain of one classroom space.

Funding for the project will be from FY2023 Operating Capital revenue. The budget estimate for the project is \$400,000. Bids were opened at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, November 30, 2021. Five bids were received as follows:

<i>Ebert Construction</i>	<i>\$333,300.00</i>
<i>Construction Results Corporation</i>	<i>\$338,902.00</i>
<i>Morcon Construction</i>	<i>\$340,163.00</i>
<i>Dering Pierson Group</i>	<i>\$355,000.00</i>
<i>KUE Construction</i>	<i>\$374,242.00</i>

Becker moved, Ambrosen seconded, that the Board approve the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board of Minnetonka Independent School District 276 does hereby accept the low bid of Ebert Construction in the amount of \$333,300.00 for alterations to the Tech Ed room at Minnetonka Middle School West in Summer 2022.

Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

13. **ACCEPTANCE OF BID FOR RETAINING WALL REPLACEMENT AT MHS**

Mr. Bourgeois noted that as part of the rolling Long Term Facility Maintenance 10 Year Plan, a second phase of replacement of the leaning retaining wall on the north side of Minnetonka High School is scheduled for Summer 2022. Approximately half of the wall was replaced in Summer 2021, leaving the remainder to be finished in Summer 2022.

The budget estimate for the project is \$375,000. Bids were opened at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, November 23, 2021. Eight bids were received as follows:

<i>SM Hentges & Sons, Inc.</i>	\$305,654.00
<i>Sunram Construction</i>	\$327,650.00
<i>JK Landscape</i>	\$347,600.00
<i>JL Theis, Inc.</i>	\$371,450.00
<i>Urban Corporation</i>	\$435,000.00
<i>Krueger Excavating</i>	\$448,164.00
<i>Parkstone Construction</i>	\$488,746.00
<i>Rosti Construction</i>	\$492,275.25

Holcomb moved, Becker seconded, that the Board approve the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board of Minnetonka Independent School District 276 does hereby accept the low bid of SM Hentges & Son, Inc., in the amount of \$305,654.00 for the second phase of replacement of the retaining wall on the north side of Minnetonka High School in Summer 2022.

Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

14. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Ambrosen moved, Becker seconded, that the School Board approve the recommendations included within the following Consent Agenda items:

- Minutes of October 28, 2021 Special Meeting; November 4, 2021 Regular Meeting and November 5, 2021 Special Meeting
- Study Session Summaries of October 28 and November 18, 2021
- Payment of Bills
- Recommended Personnel Items – as shown in Addendum A
- Gifts and Donations for November 2021: \$600.00 from Ieva and Roman Dziuba and \$200.00 from Jeff and Heather Prondzinski; both to be placed in the MHS Girls Tennis Program. \$2,400.00 from Dr. Dennis Peterson to be placed in the MHS Dr. Dennis Peterson Scholarship Account. \$500.00 from Joan Schwartz to be placed in the MHS Women of Color Club Account. \$500.00 from Joan

Schwartz to be placed in the MHS Men of Color Club Account. \$1,500.00 from the Kopp Family Foundation to be placed in the MHS Social Worker Fund. \$50.00 from the Blackbaud Giving Fund to be placed in the MME Principal Discretionary Account. \$300.00 from the Blackbaud Giving Fund and \$20.00 from Target c/o Cyber Grants, LLC; both to be placed in the Deephaven Elementary School Trust Account. \$1,000.00 from the Kopp Family Foundation to be placed in the Deephaven Elementary School Social Worker Fund. \$5.60 from the Blackbaud Giving Fund to be placed in the Excelsior Elementary School Trust Account. \$47.44 from Brent Rickenbach and \$120.00 from Winston Tan; both to be placed in the Scenic Heights Elementary School Trust Account. \$1,000.00 from the Kopp Family Foundation to be placed in the Scenic Heights School Social Worker Fund. \$1,000.00 from the Kopp Family Foundation to be placed in the MMW Social Worker Fund. \$1,000.00 from the Kopp Family Foundation to be placed in the Groveland Elementary School Social Worker Fund. \$33.32 from Frontstream to be placed in the Groveland Elementary School Principal Discretionary Fund. \$72.10 from the Benevity Community Fund and \$91.52 from the Benevity Community Fund; both to be placed in the Minnewashta Elementary School Principal Discretionary Fund. 3 cornets and 2 cases from Mike & Char Pohlad to be donated to the Minnewashta Elementary School Band Program. \$150.00 from Nicole Campion to be placed in the Clear Springs Elementary School Principal Discretionary Fund. \$1,000.00 from the Kopp Family Foundation to be placed in the Clear Springs Elementary School Social Worker Fund. \$75.00 from Dale Nelson to be placed in the MCEC Rake-a-thon Fundraiser Account. Total Gifts and Donations thus far for 2021-22: \$144,361.42.

- Electronic Fund Transfers - as shown in Addendum B
- Approval of Enrollment Limits
- Approval of Designated Combined Polling Places
- Resolution Authorizing Issuance of Certificates of Election

Upon vote being taken on the foregoing Consent Agenda items, the motion carried unanimously.

15. **BOARD REPORTS**

Board member Holcomb noted that at the recent Citizens Finance Advisory Committee meeting, they had discussed the upcoming construction of the new VANTAGE/MOMENTUM building on Highway 101, and the committee was very excited about the project. He thanked Mr. Bourgeois and the architectural firm of ATS&R for all their hard work on the project thus far.

Board member Becker spoke about the Minnetonka Community Education Hall of Fame awards and said there are great opportunities to nominate someone for one of these awards.

16. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

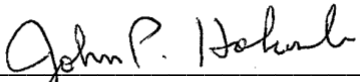
There was no report this evening.

17. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements this evening.

18. **ADJOURNMENT**

Holcomb moved, Ambrosen seconded, adjournment at 10:26 p.m. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.



John Holcomb, Clerk