



Minutes of a Regular Board Meeting, April 20, 2023  
Novi Community School District  
Board of Education

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Novi Community School District was held Thursday, April 20, 2023, beginning at 7:04 PM.

Present: Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener  
Absent: Mr. Smith by Roll Call Vote

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Members of the audience joined with the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Approve the Agenda

It was moved by Mr. Cook and supported by Mrs. Roney that the Novi Community School Board of Education approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener  
Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

CELEBRATIONS

NHS Swim Team

Don Watchowski, Director of Athletics, presented to the Board of Education our outstanding swim team and their coach, Rebecca O'Shaughnessy. Ms. O'Shaughnessy introduced member of the Swim and Dive team. They shared their exciting 2023 season with the Board and the community.

2023 Michigan State Elementary & Primary Chess Team

Novi Woods Elementary School participated in the 2023 Michigan State Elementary & Primary Team Championship, on Feb 4th. They had a sweeping victory and took third place, among 24 Teams who participated. The championship began at 9:00 AM and went to 6:00 PM.

Participants range in age from Tiny Tots to K-3rd grade, who achieved this.

Mrs. Dipika Vummadisetty shared the details of the match and introduce the team members, who were listed in the formal USCF player order of the team.

1. Pranav Vijayaraghavan (grade 2)
2. Rivan Ramdas (grade 1)
3. Jay Pediredla (grade 3)
4. Ohm Barnwal (grade 1)

Team members approached the Board and shook Board members' hands. They also had their pictures taken in front of the Board table.

Other Celebrations:

A Board Member recognized Mrs. Kaschuk, an ELA teacher at the middle school, who won a virtual

author visit with some of our seventh grade students. She reported that they talked about how they deal with their writing process. The Board member expressed her appreciation to all of the students, their parents, and staff members who were in attendance at the Board meeting.

There was a two (2) minute break at 7:20 PM, so that students and their families could leave. The Board returned at 7:22 PM.

## REPORTS TO THE BOARD

### Capital Projects Master Planning Update

The NCSD Master Planning Team has been meeting monthly with stakeholder groups, investigating our existing sites, reviewing the budget, and discussing what our needs are.

Tonight, our team will present an overview of the Master Planning process, the phases and what each phase encompasses. The team will also bring recommendations to the Board based on input from the stakeholder groups and their investigative findings.

### Non-Homestead and Recreation Millage Presentation

The Headlee Amendment and Proposal A legislation, had a huge effect on the Novi Community School District's tax millages. Tonight, Mr. Devin Kling will present to the Board and community the Non-Homestead and Recreation Millages and how they affect our District funding.

- Non-Homestead Millage, which is the District's operating millage (18 mills) on all properties except principal residences and those exempted by law.
- Recreation millage (0.9365 mills) on all properties.

Tonight, Mr. Devin Kling, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, will present to the Board and community the Non-Homestead and Recreation Millages and how they affect our District funding.

## COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were no comments from the audience.

## CONSENT AGENDA

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.

It was moved by Mr. Mean and supported by Mr. Cook that the Novi Community School Board of Education approve the Consent Item(s) as presented.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

## DONATIONS

There were no donations.

ACTION ITEMS

Personnel Report A

Laura Carino, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, presented for the Board’s consideration the personnel changes.

It was moved by Mrs. Beaudoin and supported by Mrs. Roney that the Novi Community School Board of Education adopts the personnel report A recommendations as presented.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

Personnel Report B – Administrative Reassignments

Laura Carino, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, presents for your consideration the following personnel changes.

It was moved by Mr. Michener and supported by Mrs. Beaudoin that the Novi Community School Board of Education approve Michelle DeBrincat as the Assistant Principal, and Kathleen Ader and Sarah Lephart as Interim Assistant Principals at Novi High School.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mock Trial National Competition Field Trip

Megan Chapin, Novi High School teacher, is requesting that ten to twelve students travel to Little Rock, Arkansas for the Mock Trial National Competition, from May 17-20, 2023. They will participate in legal seminars with teams from across the country.

Students will be expected to pay approximately \$500 to cover expenses including airfare and hotel accommodations.

It was moved by Mr. Cook and supported by Mr. Mena that the Novi Community School Board of Education approve the Mock Trial National Competition Field trip to Little Rock, Arkansas, from May 17 – 20, 2023.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener

Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

Novi High School Band Uniform Purchase

The Band Uniforms are desperate need of replacement. Matt Diroff, the Band Director at Novi High School, is requesting the purchase of new band uniforms. This went out to bid and on March 13, 2023, the vendors presented their sample uniforms. The McCormic’s sample did not match the specifications for the uniform. It was missing, the hat and the quote for the jacket and the rest of the uniform was constructed of very thin material that will not wear well.

Mr. Diroff is recommending that the Board award the bid to Fred J. Miller (FJM) in the amount of \$129,825.00. Their uniform matched all specifications and the material is of much higher quality and will last significantly longer.

It was moved by Mrs. Roney and supported by Mr. Cook that the Novi Community School Board of Education award the bid for the Band Uniform purchase to Fred J. Miller (FJM) in the amount of

\$129, 825.00.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener  
Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

DEI Definitions Review

On March 2, 2023, the DEI Committee of the Whole met to discuss, define, and review what Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion means in the Novi Community School District. These DEI definitions are presented tonight for Board information and discussion.

It was moved by Mr. Michener and supported by Mrs. Beaudoin that the Novi Community School Board of Education approve the DEI definitions as presented.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener  
Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

Novi Meadows Public Address System, A/V, Synchronized Clock System

Part of the 2019 Bond, was to develop plans and install a Public Address System, Classroom Audio/Visual Systems, and Synchronized Clock Systems for the new Novi Meadows Building.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued on December 12, 2022. On Friday, January 27, 2023 bids were opened and publicly read. On February 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, the team met and conducted post-bid interviews.

Tonight, IDS and the District's Technology Team are recommending the Board award the contract to DAT in the amount of \$818,710 for this project.

It was moved by Mrs. Roney and supported by Mrs. Beaudoin that the Novi Community School District Board of Education award the Public Address System, Classroom Audio/Visual Systems, and Synchronized Clock Systems for the new Novi Meadows Building to DAT in the amount of \$818,710 and further authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations to expend the fund from the 2019 Bond fund.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener  
Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

August 2023 NCSD Ballot Proposal Language Approval

The law requires that for any election resolution to be placed on the ballot, a proposal to continue the millage, must be adopted by the Board and submitted to the Election Clerk's office.

Funds received from the Operating Millage have been essential to keeping our facilities in good repair and safe condition; projects improve the safety conditions for our students, staff and community, safeguard the community's investment in our facilities, and provide for emergency repairs.

Proposed ballot language to place an Operating Millage proposal has been drafted by legal counsel and is attached.

Tonight, we are presenting the Operating Millage for action and requesting Board approval due to the

submission deadline date that will come before our next regular Board meeting on May 18, 2023.

It was moved by Mr. Michener and supported by Mrs. Roney that the Novi Community School District Board of Education, in the best interest of the District, approve the language contained in the attached proposal, on the ballot in the upcoming August election.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener  
Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### NCS D Capital Projects Master Planning Phase I Approval

The NCS D Master Planning Team has been meeting monthly with stakeholder groups, investigating our existing sites, reviewing the budget, and discussing what our needs are.

The following page of recommendations are by site and chronological order:

- Meadows 6<sup>th</sup> Grade House
- Educational Services Building (ESB)
- ROAR Center
- Novi High School

It was moved by Mr. Mena and supported by Mr. Cook that the Novi Community School Board of Education approve the NCS D 2023 Capital Projects Phase I recommendations as presented.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener  
Nays: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

##### Chartwells Contract Renewal

At the June 16, 2022 Board of Education meeting, Chartwells was approved to continue to serve as the district's food service management company for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. They have been providing Food Service in the District since 2013. The current contract expires on June 30, 2023.

Chartwells manages contracts with approximately 200 school districts in Michigan. District administration has been extremely satisfied with the work performed by Chartwells and especially Kimberly Sinclair, Food and Nutrition Director.

The Food Service Management Contract renewal is being presented for Board approval information and discussion tonight.

##### Student Board Representative Introduction

Our last formal Student Board Representative report was given at the March 5, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board, then COVID hit and stopped all in-person meetings. We are proud to be able to introduce our new Student Board Representative to the Board of Education and the community tonight.

There were several student meetings since January and Jennifer Rajash has been chosen to represent the students with her reports to the Board. Mr. Mainka will introduce Jennifer and tell us about her.

### 2023-24 Oakland Schools Budget

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 2023-24 proposed budget documents: a set for the Superintendent, Business Manager, and Board Treasurer, Mary Ann Roney.

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 is holding a remote Designates Meeting on Thursday, April 20, 2023 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 18, 2023, regular meeting.

### NCSO New Hiring Process Explanation

Dr. Laura Carino formed a committee to help her look at the District's hiring process and what we can do differently. The committee has explored ways to streamline paperwork and spark interest in candidates to come and work here. Dr. Carino has been expanding the district's efforts to reach candidates that are underrepresented in Novi.

Tonight, Dr. Carino presented to the Board and community the updated hiring practices and Procedures.

### NCSO Curriculum Implementation Review

Mr. Giromini reviewed the levels of curriculum approval with the Board.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Governance and Policy Committee

Dr. Danielle Ruskin, Board President and Committee Chair, reported that the committee had met several times. She stated that they reviewed the 1000s, had a conversation about the policy implementation process, and had a conversation about the 2000s, the bylaws, and getting rid of the BOP and transferring it into the 2000s. Dr. Ruskin said that will take some time. She mentioned that

the committee made it through most of the 3000s and that they are over halfway. Dr. Ruskin reported that they should have a draft document sometime in June.

#### Joint DEI and Curriculum Committee

Mrs. Betsy Beaudoin, Board Trustee and DEI Committee Chair, and Mr. Paul Cook, Board Trustee and Curriculum Committee Chair, reported jointly on the meeting. Mr. Cook stated that in this meeting and the Curriculum meeting members took a look at the gap, the definition of the gap, and looked at what measures we are using to determine what it is and how they are going to make any progress on it. He said that they also looked at what historically the District has done to address that gap and what the new administration would be looking at in the future. Mr. Cook mentioned that these would eventually be reviewed for their effectiveness and either tweaked, abandoned, or changed.

#### Curriculum Committee

Mr. Paul Cook, Board Trustee and Curriculum Committee Chair, reported that the committee met once or twice since the last Board meeting and went over the pyramid and talked about introducing AI and what it will mean to some of our curriculum. He stated that it was a brief introduction and it is going to change education here pretty quickly.

Mr. Cook said the other thing that Mr. Giromini covered was his plans for his department and some new people that will be coming in to different areas and they will be looking at different programs. He mentioned that it is refreshing that the administration is looking very heavily into the details, the processes, and either create a process or streamline processes. Mr. Cook praised Mr. Devin Kling for all of his efforts making this happen in the District Budget.

#### DEI Committee

Mrs. Betsy Beaudoin, Board Trustee and DEI Committee Chair, reported the committee met for a couple of hours and had a lot of wonderful people that participated. She stated that they talked about activities that are going on in the community and thoughts and suggestions on what the next steps should be to help some of the groups become successful. Mrs. Beaudoin said they discussed the different support plans for different subgroups (economically disadvantaged, special education, and African American) and that they identified in the joint committee meeting. She mentioned that there are some students who are further behind and they are working on offerings to help elevate those students.

Mrs. Beaudoin reported that a representative from the District DEI Team provided great updates on what is going on in our buildings, at the teacher to student level. She stated that they looked at some big picture things and then some of the small detail items. Mrs. Beaudoin said they made great progress and expressed her gratitude to everyone who participated.

#### Capital Projects Committee

Mr. Willy Mena, Board Secretary and Committee member, and Mr. Paul Cook, Board Trustee and Committee Member, reported for Mr. Tom Smith, Committee Chair, in his absence. Mr. Paul Cook stated that these meetings go over where the current projects are standing, what we are looking forward to doing in the future, and some discussion on the master planning and hopefully moving on to the next phase.

Mr. Mena said that it is important for him, as a committee member, to ask the tough questions and his biggest concern is, are we considering all possible options. He mentioned that they are really moving chess pieces around to figure out where things are going to fit. Mr. Cook reported that he was surprised with what they came up with and very happy with the process. He stated that he was comfortable with the plan.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Benjamin Mainka, Superintendent of Schools, reported that he had the opportunity to substitute in Mrs. Fox's class. He stated that getting a chance to work with the kids and see what they do every day brings him back and it was a lot of fun. He stated that this was the NEF Substitute Superintendent Day.

Mr. Mainka said that the negotiations have gone very well and Dr. Carino has done a lot of work and he is excited about that. He mentioned that our HOSA Group is getting ready to attend their trip up to Traverse City, next week. Mr. Mainka reported that three to four hundred kids are heading out for that competition. He stated that pretty basically they will take up the whole hotel and he is pretty excited to hear how they do. Mr. Mainka said that they do well every year.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Devin Kling, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, reported that they have a lot going on. He stated that they are coming to a close of the last quarter of this fiscal year and also their financial forecast, so we are making sure that we cross our T's and dot our I's. Mr. Kling said that we are still waiting for the State. He mentioned that they are planning to meet this month, but postponed it until May in hopes that they would receive more information on what to expect for the upcoming year.

Mr. Kling reported that he was able to get into the new Meadows building and see the construction process. He stated that the drywall is up, the glass is going in, fixtures are going in, and it is really exciting.

Mr. Kling said that he and his wife had the opportunity to attend the Green Gala and it was a great event. He mentioned that they did not win anything they had bid on because it was not in the budget. Mr. Kling reported that it is a rare event in Michigan and a cool partnership that we have.

Dr. Laura Carino, Assistant Superintendent of Talent Management and Development, reported that they were able to recognize the Outstanding Support Person of the Year, Michelle Cingle, at Deerfield. She stated that Michelle is a paraprofessional and they surprised her on Monday. Dr. Carino said that they presented her with a check and that Michelle was absolutely touched. She mentioned that when Michelle was called to the office, she thought it was an emergency and came running down the hall. Dr. Carino reported that this was a testament how to how she supports the students at Deerfield. She stated that Michelle will be invited to the May Board meeting.

Dr. Carino reported that the NEA negotiations have gone extremely well. She stated that they had three (3) sessions and she will give the Board more behind the scenes insight in the closed session. Dr. Carino said that it has been a very collaborative process and they have made a lot of progress. She mentioned that they look forward to their continued partnership as they have another session next week.



Dr. Carino reported that the K-4 principal process is underway. She stated that they will be interviewing people next week for the Novi Woods and Orchard Hills positions. Dr. Carino said that they look forward to recommending a candidate at the May Board meeting.

Dr. Carino reported that she looks forward to meeting our therapy dogs, who are growing. She stated that they are finalizing the process and the placement in the buildings. Dr. Carino said they will be sharing an application for our staff handlers in the coming week and will then identify who will be the handlers and then notify the schools where they will be placed. She mentioned that they will be asking for names because the puppies are at that point.

Dr. Carino reported that she attended the Green Gala. She stated that it was very nice to enjoy the evening in person.

Dr. Carino recognized our administrative professional in advance because Administrative Professional's Day is next week. And they really are top notch here. She reported that they are the front faces of our buildings, keep us organized, and do so much behind the scenes that they do not get credit for.

Mr. Giromini, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, reported that he attended the Green Gala and won a number of auction items. He stated that he picked them up yesterday.

Mr. Giromini reported that it is Autism Awareness Month and it is a great opportunity for us to recognize and raise awareness about the wonderful uniqueness of people with Autism. He stated that our Special Education Department organized a nice week of recognition and awareness in our buildings, almost like a spirit week. Mr. Giromini said it was fantastic.

Mr. Giromini reported that our buildings are of have been engaged in a lot of State testing or makeup State testing. He stated that our iReady third diagnostic window starts next week. Mr. Giromini said that our Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Diploma Program students will be testing in May. He mentioned that we are starting the senior event season, with our local scholarship breakfast, next week, then convocation will be here before we know it, and then graduation. Mr. Giromini reported that it is exciting times.

#### BOARD COMMUNICATION

A Board member reported that she is on the OCSBA Governance Committee. She stated that it has been quite interesting. The Board member said that they got an update on the State Budget and it is, oh there is no budget. She mentioned that they are shooting for the 27<sup>th</sup> and hoping the House and the Senate do something. The Board member reported that a group of them are going up there in the morning and are supposed to meet with our representatives in the afternoon. She stated that they are spots open if anybody would like to go and you get a boxed lunch by the Traverse City Pie Company. The Board member said that they talked about the awards banquet and our own Paul Cook is up for two (2) awards.

The Board member mentioned that they had their first Round Table with herself, Paul, and Betsy and that it went very well. She reported that it was a very nice conversation between the Board members and the community. The Board members stated that they had the Board Tours and it was fun. She

said they toured the ROAR Center, Village Oaks, and Orchard Hills. The Board member reported that she attended the Green Gala and did not get anything. She stated that she tried, but her husband said it was not in their budget. The Board member said that she is looking forward to the Little Mermaid tomorrow night.

A Board member reported that Deerfield PTO has been busy and he attended the science fair. He stated that it was cool to see kids demonstrating physics' processes. The Board member said the Deerfield Senior Events for fourth graders is going on right now and they have done their second in a series of four, where they went to Launch and got to expend a lot of energy. He mentioned that they had a blast and it was great to see the class spend time together before they go to Meadows.

A Board member reported that it is Autism Acceptance Month and the Special Education Department is doing a great job of getting the rest of the student body to participate and celebrate. He stated that earlier tonight, we had a great group of young men that are role models and he believes that it comes from the top on down, our Athletic Director all the way down to the students. The Board member said they set a role model for the younger kids and they may not know it, but when a younger kid sees them they want to be like them. He mentioned that they set an example for those kids and that is something he learned a long time ago. The Board member reported that it comes from the Athletic Director to the coaches to the kids and he wanted to celebrate and thank Don Watchowski for his example leading his department.

A Board member reported that Mr. Watchowski's lessons, with his presence all night; when our previous athletic director, Brian Gordon was here, he was winning all sorts of awards and making sure that things were happening. He stated that it is nice to see that Don has continued in those ways. The Board member said that we are in good hands

#### CLOSED SESSION – NEGOTIATIONS

A public body may meet in a closed session only for one or more purposes as specified in the Open Meetings Act. Tonight, the Board will move into a closed session for the purposes of contract negotiations.

It was moved by Mr. Michener and supported by Mr. Cook that the Novi Community Schools Board of Education move into a Closed Session for the purposes of contract negotiations.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener

Nays: 0 by Roll Call Vote **MOTION CARRIED**

#### ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Mena and supported by Mr. Cook that the Novi Community School District Board of Education Regular Board meeting be adjourned.

Ayes: 6 Dr. Ruskin, Mr. Mena, Mrs. Roney, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Beaudoin, and Mr. Michener

Nays: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for April 20, 2023 at 7:00 p.m., at the Educational Services Building.

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Willy Mena, Board of Education Secretary