North Cook Intermediate Service Center
Governing Board Official Minutes
1001 E. Touhy Avenue, Suite 350
Des Plaines, IL 60018
Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at 7:30 a.m.

I. **CALL NORTH COOK REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER**
The regular meeting of the Governing Board of North Cook Intermediate Service Center was called to order by Executive Director, Dr. April D. Jordan, at 7:31 a.m.

Members Present: Michelle Adams, Don Angelaccio, Keith Bellof, Marcus Campbell (7:40am), Karen Foley, Anny Lee, Sheila Yousuf-Abramson

Members Absent: Arlen Gould, Lisa Lau, Ileo Lott

Recording Secretary: Gina Shalzi, Office Manager, NCISC

Others Present: April D. Jordan, Executive Director, NCISC
Allison Slade, Assistant Executive Director, NCISC
Terrie Simmons, Business Manager, NCISC
Alina Morelli Baima, Director of Education & PL, NCISC
Cheryl Moore, Director of Human Resources, NCISC
Cathy Kedjidjian, Director of Communications, NCISC

II. **RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC** – None

III. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

a. Executive Director's Report – Dr. April Jordan talked with the Board about the resignation of Board member Cindy Whittaker. Cindy was an NCISC Governing Board member for 12 years and Board Chair for 11 of those years.

i. Annual Report 2023-24 – Dr. Jordan reviewed the Annual Report with the Board and described how NCISC has grown in the past year. Leadership has gone from 4 to 5, and now at 6; staffing has gone from 29 to 59, and now currently at 87; Parent contacts to assist students went from 260 students to 776 students; the number of phone calls to parents went from 1,080 to 4,834; home visits from 220 to 378; and the program's graduates went from 78 to 207 in middle school and 15 to 62 in high school (54 graduated). Also, participation in bus driver training sessions are also on the rise.

ii. FY25 Strategic Plan Update (Year 2) – NCISC's strategic plan is now in year two. With the addition of Cathy Kedjidjian, Director of Communications, there is now an added Communications section.

iii. New NCISC Logo & Branding Change Update (only ICS) – April explained that North Cook's new logo reflects that we are an "ISC" not an "ISC/ROE." April thanked everyone that came to the September 5th meeting to celebrate our new logo/rebranding.

iv. Updated NCISC ByLaws (name only) – The ByLaws were also updated to reflect NCISC to only be an ISC and not an ROE. Titles were all corrected, per April.

v. Open Governing Board Seat – April discussed with the Governing Board the opening that is now present on our board due to Cindy Whittaker's resignation. The NCISC Leadership Team will continue to have a discussion about the seat and hopes to have the position filled before the next Governing Board meeting in January of 2025.

b. Communications Report – Cathy Kedjidjian, Director of Communications, reported to the Board that based on the Strategic Plan, our rebranding has reflected North Cook's identity. Cathy shared a video with the Board that is also reflective of North Cook's beliefs (again based on the Strategic Plan) and shows the current culture still being strong and unique.

Cathy described the rollout of the rebranding plan which is reflected in our new website, LinkedIn and our emails. The new website is our new "hub" for people and it has a cleaner look, is more navigable, includes a chatbox, and is translatable. Our website will be highlighting things that are happening in our North Cook districts and Professional Learning that is being offered for educators. It will be a work in progress.

Cathy will also be personally working with some of our North Cook districts with their branding, referendum campaigns, general communication plans (how to create a plan and help the district launch), plus how to develop the plan with others on their team.

c. Professional Learning Report – Alina Morelli Baima, Director of Education & PL, explained to the Board how she has "hit the ground running" in less than 3 months and has already presented a session at District 57 on "Portrait of a Culturally Responsive District 57 Educator."

Alina stated that the needs assessment has been reviewed and she is taking this all into account to continuously grow programs. The needs across the districts vary widely. This diversity in needs will significantly influence the approach to professional learning and consultative efforts.

There have been three new staff members added to Alina's PL Team: Ally Healey, SEL & Behavior Coordinator; Kelsi Spain, DEIB & Wellness Coordinator; and Carrie Clement, Instructional Coach Coordinator. Alina has also onboarded three new consultants. Alina will still be running the following collaboratives: Buildings & Grounds, Curriculum & Instruction, DEIB, Instructional Coaches, Student Services, and now also a Communications Collaborative (run by Cathy Kedjidjian, Director of Communications) which makes it six in total. Alina stated that she plans on bringing in some speakers to her collaborative meetings, as well. Also, there will be compliance visits to 10 of our NCISC districts in FY25 with Paul Hertel as the NCISC Compliance lead. Alina will be the lead for checking staff and their Professional Learning requirements.

d. Student Services Report

i. Student Services Update – Allison Slade, Assistant Executive Director, stated that September 2024 marks the launching of the second full school year of Student Advocacy. North Cook currently has 52 Student Advocates in 32 of our North Cook schools. The advocacy program is piloting a program in two elementary schools, but we are only able to serve students in 4th and 5th grade at this time.

The 2nd initiative this year, for small schools only, was to place single advocates. Experienced Advocates have been moved into these positions. All Advocates were in place this summer and they had three weeks of onboarding training.

We retained 86% of our Student Advocacy staff. One of our Advocates was promoted to be a Support Specialist Advocate. Every new Advocate has a peer and a coordinator. We have put into place a new PD structure, and an opt-in/opt-out component for meetings. We are providing all-Advocate meetings, separate middle school and high school Advocate meetings, and optional "pop-in if you want" meetings.

Student Attendance Program – This program continues to grow and many of our Student Advocates report that attendance seems to be the biggest issue. We are currently analyzing this issue. If students are not coming to school, the Student Advocates cannot help, so our Attendance Liaisons are contacted. If students are coming to school but not going to class, Student Advocates can help with this attendance issue. We recently hired a 3rd Attendance Liaison, Spanish speaking, to help work with families. Soon, we will be offering universal professional learning opportunities for staff in districts that currently handle attendance issues. In the later fall, we will be offering a workshop for families (in English and Spanish).

ii. NCYAA & ALOP Enrollment Update – It's been a nice launch. We have gotten a ton of referrals for both ALOP and RSSP in both middle school and high school. We are seeing a lot of need for alternative options.

Our school is more robust this year with the addition of three new teachers and six Spanish-speaking staff members, which helps support our students. A Student Advocate was added to the staff and a Co-Principal for Instructional Programming. The Co-Principal of Instruction, Nataly Lopez-Diaz, is helping to align ISBE's standards with the curriculum.

At the end of October, there will be an Executive Committee Meeting with our districts. We are continuously working on what kinds of programs we can provide to our students. Lots of other opportunities await us while in this growth mode.

Currently, enrollment at NCYAA is 30+ students.

e. Financial Report

i. FY24 End of Year Actuals – Terrie Simmons, NCISC Business Manager, commented on the FY24 actual results and noted that we ended the year positively. Terrie pointed out that the new programs in the Professional Learning Department as well as the Bus Training Department produced higher net income than anticipated. Attendance at these trainings have grown since COVID. Terrie described the different revenue sources and how they are allocated into different areas. In summary, all balances are in the black. Terrie/April pointed out to the Board to look at the "Summary by Fund" to see the overall numbers.

ii. FY25 Proposed Budget – Terrie reminded the Governing Board that we budget conservatively each fall, then we update our working budget throughout the year. Terrie also explained the grants we receive and how they are used and what expenses they fund. The general fund was reviewed and Terrie explained how some of these funds will be allocated to the building contingency, as well as used to grow our programs, according to the strategic plan. She continued to explain all of the NCISC funds and that at the end of the fiscal year, all funds should be in the black.

iii. Building Contingency-Designated Fund Balance – Terrie explained that, per the strategic plan, $300,000 of FY24 proceeds are to be "designated" within the General Fund balance specifically for creating the building fund contingency. Considering the FY24 actual results, she recommends increasing that amount by an additional $200,000 now and continuing the practice of designating approximately $500,000 per year during the upcoming years. This is an action item on the agenda and will be voted on at today's meeting.

f. Human Resources Report – Cheryl Moore stated that NCISC has hired 37 new staff members this year. As we continue to grow, Cheryl has created handbooks so that practices are clear. A specific addendum has been added for Student Advocates. Cheryl explained that because of the large amount of hiring, we needed a system that could track hiring. She has established Red Rover to be our official tracking and online hiring system. All job descriptions have been updated with our new NCISC logo and they have been reviewed for correct language and consistency. Cheryl stated that she is also implementing a new evaluation system.

i. Updated, North Cook ISC (NCISC) Organizational Chart FY25 – April explained the updates to the Organizational Chart. Margot Fennelly will be retiring some time this year and Ted Mesiacos will be her replacement. Elsie Lagunas is now the Student Advocate Support Specialist, Yahaira Castro was hired as the 3rd Attendance Liaison, and Vicky Irizarry is the Student Services Administrative Assistant.

ii. Policy Manual Updates and New Policies:
- 1st Reading:
  - Section 500
  - New Policies:
    - 300.50 – Uniform Grievance Procedure
    - 300.55 – Title IX Grievance Procedure
    - 400.10 – Identity Protection Act

Cheryl and the Leadership Team are doing a comprehensive review of the policy manual, beginning with Section 500 (Personnel). After reviewing, Cheryl is also recommending three new policies. These recommendations aim to clarify or simplify the existing language.

These 1st reading policies will be back on the January Board meeting agenda as 2nd readings for approval, but in the meantime, we will operate as if they are in policy.

iii. Policy Manual Updates, 2nd Reading – In order to bring policy into alignment with current practices and to clarify language, Cheryl is recommending updates to 3 policies. This is a 2nd Reading and they are on this agenda as an Action Item for approval by the Governing Board:
- Policy 500.130, Leaves for Illness
- Policy 500.210, Personal Leave
- Policy 500.240, Vacation

IV. **CONSENT AGENDA ACTION ITEMS**

Resolution

It was moved by Sheila Yousuf-Abramson and seconded by Keith Bellof that on this 24th day of September 2024, the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board place on the consent agenda and approve the action items listed below, as presented or corrected:

- Approval of Personnel Items – Per Personnel Report in Board Packet
- Approval of Regular Governing Board Meeting Minutes of June 5, 2024
- Approval of Regular Disbursements for:
  - June 11, 2024 (2): $423,323.05
  - June 27, 2024 (3): $78,863.26
  - July 9, 2024: $81,734.00
  - July 11, 2024: $6,036.11
  - July 23, 2024: $123,812.36
  - August 6, 2024: $48,167.02
  - August 14, 2024: $1,622.48
  - August 20, 2024: $151,049.35
  - September 5, 2024: $3,491.67
  - September 10, 2024: $112,008.67
- Approval of Payroll Register from May 30, 2024 through September 15, 2024
- Approval of updated NCISC ByLaws (name only)

Roll Call Vote:
Ayes: Adams, Angelaccio, Bellof, Campbell, Foley, Lee, Yousuf-Abramson
Nays: None
Absent: Gould, Lau, Lott

The chairperson declared the motion carried.

V. **ACTION ITEMS**

a. Approval of NCISC Policy Manual Updates, 2nd Reading

Resolution
It was moved by Marcus Campbell and seconded by Sheila Yousuf-Abramson that on this 24th day of September 2024, the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board approve the NCISC Policy Manual Updates, as presented or corrected:

- Policy 500.130 – Leaves for Illness
- Policy 500.210 – Personal Leave
- Policy 500.240 – Vacation

Roll Call Vote:
Ayes: Adams, Angelaccio, Bellof, Campbell, Foley, Lee, Yousuf-Abramson
Nays: None
Absent: Gould, Lau, Lott

The chairperson declared the motion carried.

b. Approval of FY25 NCISC Budget

Resolution
It was moved by Keith Bellof and seconded by Karen Foley that on this 24th day of September 2024, the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board approve the FY25 NCISC Budget, as presented or corrected:

Roll Call Vote:
Ayes: Adams, Angelaccio, Bellof, Campbell, Foley, Lee, Yousuf-Abramson
Nays: None
Absent: Gould, Lau, Lott

The chairperson declared the motion carried.

c. Approval of NCISC Building Fund Contingency

Resolution
It was moved by Karen Foley and seconded by Michelle Adams that on this 24th day of September 2024, the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board approve the Building Fund Contingency, as presented or corrected:

Roll Call Vote:
Ayes: Adams, Angelaccio, Bellof, Campbell, Foley, Lee, Yousuf-Abramson
Nays: None
Absent: Gould, Lau, Lott

The chairperson declared the motion carried.

VI. **COMMUNICATIONS**

a. Three FOIA requests: Molly Parker, Capitol News IL; Angie Leventis, Chicago Tribune; Vance V., Creative Energy

VII. **BOARD ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** – The Board acknowledged and thanked Cindy Whittaker for her years on the Board and wished her well.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING**

Resolution: It was moved by Sheila Yousuf-Abramson and seconded by Keith Bellof at 8:56 a.m. that the meeting be adjourned.

Voice Vote: All present voted Aye

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 a.m.

The next meeting of the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board will be held on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, beginning at 7:30 a.m. at the North Cook ISC offices located at 1001 E. Touhy Ave., Suite 200 in Des Plaines.

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Don Angelaccio, Chairperson

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Gina Shalzi, Secretary