North Cook Intermediate Service Center
Governing Board Official Minutes
1001 E. Touhy Avenue, Suite 350
Des Plaines, IL 60018
Wednesday, January 22, 2025 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 7:34 a.m.

Members Present: Michelle Adams, Don Angelaccio, Keith Bellof, Karen Foley, Arlen Gould, Lisa Lau (7:54am), Ileo Lott (7:40am), Sheila Yousuf-Abramson

Members Absent: Marcus Campbell, Zipporah Hightower, Anny Lee

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
Cheryl Moore, Director of Human Resources, NCISC
Cathy Kedjidjian, Director of Communications, NCISC

a. Dr. Jordan told the governing board that the new board member, Dr. Zipporah Hightower, Superintendent from District 73.5, was not able to attend this morning's meeting because of illness. The board wished her well and looks forward to meeting her at the April meeting.
b. Dr. Jordan talked about Margot Fennelly's retirement after 14 years of service at North Cook. Margot was our Health/Life Safety Consultant and we are very thankful for her years of service. Ted Mesiacos will be Margot's replacement.

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

III. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
a. Executive Director's Report – Dr. April Jordan gave the board a brief description of current happenings at NCISC:
- We are on track, as predicted, with our finances
- North Cook is working with CBRE looking at possible new locations
- Terrie Simmons working timelessly on our audit
- Cheryl Moore, HR, is working on an evaluation system for Student Advocates, NCYAA, and NCISC staff; also a new tool and online platform for new applicants
- Special thanks to Cathy Kedjidjian who nominated April as a "Superintendent to Watch" through NSPRA
- Vision 2030
- Calendars being approved at this board meeting, moved up from the April meeting (as was done in the past)
- Rolling out fee-based Communication services
- Allison Slade vetting all her new hires

- Attorney Robb Cooper, our attorney for many years, has retired and we are now with Kriha Boucek
- NCISC partnering with the North Division–IASA and District 214 for a job fair

i. Facility Planning Update – Dr. Jordan stated that NCISC is working with CBRE to seriously look at some possibilities for a new NCISC/NCYAA location. We are limiting our search to a very specific area. Our current lease ends in 2030, but as of November 2025, we must give notice and have a space secured. However, the earliest we can leave this site would be July 2026. If we stay here, we limit our services. We would like the opportunity to build new programs plus avoid putting our students on a waiting list. We have a need to support our districts and students, but we are limited with our current space.

Our three (3) options are:
- NCYAA moves out first and then NCISC moves in 2030, paying 2 leases
- In 2026, we both move but we would pay a penalty (approx. $600,000.00)
- We all stay until 2030

ii. Evaluation Tool and Process for Evaluating the Executive Director – April explained to the Board that the Executive Director's evaluation tool is being updated. April and Don spent time looking at the evaluation tools together. In the past, there were 52 questions to answer, many of which were answered with "not enough information to evaluate" by the Board. The new questionnaire will align to the Strategic Plan. It will also be tied to leadership standards, the standard set for leadership skills. The evaluation will be sent out to the Board and completed before the April Board meeting. It will then be discussed in closed session. This new evaluation tool and process is an action item on today's agenda for Board Members' approval.

iii. FY25 Strategic Plan, Mid-Year Update – Dr. Jordan shared with the Board, updates in all five (5) of the Strategic Plan's focus areas:

Communications: Cathy's launch of the brand/website. The goal is to bring viewers back to the website as it continues to grow and is our "hub." Our brand is making us more recognizable. We are introducing communications to our districts and helping communicators in their role. That plays through in our Communication Collaborative, with resources to share and to learn/grow from each other.

Student Services: Allison explained that this year the department has launched an individual advocate model. This was added in District 214 and we are monitoring how this is working for the advocate to see if this idea can continue to grow further and what additional support they may need.

Currently, there are 55 Student Advocates in 31 schools. The goal is to increase slowly (10-12 more next year) and to slightly change the leadership structure. We are trying to move to more of a "feeder pattern" model. For example, advocates at a high school and advocates at the feeder districts would be in a "pod" (10 schools or less) with one coordinator working with these streams of schools/advocates. Looking ahead, we will have 4 patterns next year that will include between 9-10 schools each.

At mid-year, NCYAA's new model of two principals and a piloted staff leadership-team at the school, has received very positive feedback. They are developing procedures and other ideas to help and improve NCYAA.

Our Truancy Team is developing some fees-for-service for our districts, in addition to the case management for tier 3 students. The first district using one of our new services will be Wheeling District 21. They are hiring Attendance Liaisons and we are going to do a 2-day training to help them get started.

Professional Learning and Support: Alina's new team has brought so many new connections to us, which enables us to offer many free services to our districts: Kelsi Spain is our DEIB & Wellness Coordinator; Ally Healey is our SEL & Behavior Coordinator; and Carrie Clement is our Instructional Coach Coordinator. Alina has been delivering PL to our districts and their entire Administrative Teams.

Organizational Systems and Capacity: Cheryl is building an infrastructure as we are hiring so many new people during the year. Cheryl is also reviewing section 500 (Human Resources) of the Policy Manual, aligning it with PRESS and updating verbiage.

Finance: Finance, in the Strategic Plan, addresses the needs of staff and students here and in our districts. We are looking at new locations. Also, we will be bringing some students with us to take a look at spaces.

Seven years ago, CBRE did a great job in the search for our current office/school. They have found 12 possible sites that we narrowed down to four. We will be looking at them this afternoon. If nothing works out, we have options:

1. Lease property that we have today and move the school by the summer of 2026. We have to look at it from all aspects.
2. If those properties are not feasible for us, we may need to purchase land and build ourselves. 2026 will then not work.
3. Nothing is on the market right now, we will wait and continue to keep looking for the next 3-4 years. Then we would be here until 2030.

iv. Illinois Vision 2030 – Vision 2030 is rooted in a shared belief that students learn best, and educators teach most effectively, when they feel safe and connected to one another and to their communities. Our support of Vision 2030 is the single most important thing we can do to support both academic achievement and individual well-being—and it is something that has to be considered when offering services related to an instructional approach, curriculum, student support services, and professional learning.

Below are the goals and priorities of Vision 2030:

1. Provide a roadmap to enhance K-12 public education through future-focused learning, shared accountability, and predictable funding.
2. Articulate a shared commitment to putting systems and processes in place that support all school districts throughout the state in sharing what works for our kids and our communities.

3. Advance policy, legislative and fiscal solutions, leverage public resources, and preserve local flexibility and leadership so that the important decisions about curriculum and finances are made closest to home.

b. Communications Report – Cathy Kedjidjian, Director of Communications, reported to the Board that NCISC had a "soft-launch" of fee-based communications services by leading a referendum information campaign for Golf District 67 and providing a video and social media campaign for Mount Prospect District 57. Both of these districts had success on Election Day. Cathy also now prepares and distributes monthly NCISC newsletters and is currently working on a video for the ALOP program. She has also started a Communications Collaborative, which has been very successful.

c. Education & Professional Learning Report – In Alina's absence, April talked about all of the learning opportunities that are happening and constantly being added to the event schedule. The Mentor Program continues to grow and we are offering many Book Studies with distinguished authors. Our collaboratives continue to flourish and grow, as well as our Leadership Coaching Program.

   The NCISC Coordinators continue to partner with our districts throughout the North Cook region. As of December 2024, they have worked with 13 different districts and with our Student Advocates. They have also had 7 of these districts return for additional projects and support.

d. Student Services Report
   i. Student Services Report – Allison Slade, Assistant Executive Director, stated that the department continues to be very busy; currently 55 Student Advocates - serving 1,200 students (740 students last year), including after-school programs and throughout the summer months.

      Allison is working closely with Cheryl in HR to be less invasive to the districts when changes occur.

      Our districts were informed that next year, we will only expand our program by 1-2 districts, and then expand our current districts. Allison stated that everything is growing as expected and the leadership structure will be shifting.

      NCYAA continues to grow and until we know more about our current space and future plans, that will negate any new hiring of staff. We will also continue to monitor students' successes –– are the outcomes successful, neutral, or not successful? We want a program to be developed that fits all students' needs as our goal is to be successful with every student.

   ii. NCYAA & ALOP Enrollments – Please review the enrollments on the chart in the board packet. As noted, December's totals go down at the end of the month

due to some students returning to their home districts. Enrollments usually go back up in January.

e. Financial Report – Terrie Simmons, Business Manager, stated that from November to December, our financials continue to grow in the black moving in the right direction. The audit continues to be worked on but it is still on track to be released at the end of this month, as in the past.

f. Human Resources Report – Cheryl Moore, Director of HR, stated NCISC is busy with new hiring and some departures of staff. Cheryl continues to work on the evaluation system which will focus on employee growth and the alignment to the strategic plan.

Job descriptions have been updated and all staff members were asked to create a description/task list so we have organization continuity.

Cheryl is now working through non-public schools' compliance, three have been completed. Cheryl explained we partner with them so they are recognized by the state. This year, Cheryl will be doing more than double the amount of schools than in the past.

g. Policy Updates

i. Policy Manual Updates, 1st Reading (various, see log in Policy Report) – Cheryl and the Leadership Team continue their comprehensive review of the Policy Manual, beginning with Section 500 (Personnel).

These 1st reading policies will be back on the April Board meeting agenda as 2nd readings for approval, but in the meantime, we will operate as if they are in policy. These updates are in alignment with our legislative responsibilities and/or PRESS.

ii. Policy Manual Updates, 2nd Reading: Section 500; New: 300.50, 300.55, 400.10 – These policies are an action item on today's agenda for Governing Board Approval.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA ACTION ITEMS

Resolution

It was moved by Arlen Gould and seconded by Sheila Yousuf-Abramson that on this 22nd day of January 2025, 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 the Board Packet
- Approval of Regular Governing Board Meeting Minutes of September 24, 2024
- Approval of Regular Disbursements for:
  - September 24, 2024: $118,157.21
  - September 25, 2024: $48,931.32
  - October 15, 2024: $228,291.91
  - October 29, 2024: $19,572.42
  - November 12, 2024: $239,509.44
  - November 20, 2024: $30,378.57

- December 9, 2024: $251,465.83
- December 17, 2024: $25,093.88

- Approval of Payroll Register from September 30, 2024 through December 31, 2024
- Approval of the NCISC Holiday Schedule FY26
- Approval of the NCYAA School Calendar FY26

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

The chairperson declared the motion carried.

V. **ACTION ITEMS**

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

Resolution
It was moved by Keith Bellof and seconded by Karen Foley that on this 22nd day of January 2025, the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board approve the NCISC Policy Manual Updates, as presented or corrected:

- Updated Policy: Section 500 – Personnel Policies
- Policy 300.50 – Uniform Grievance Procedure
- Policy 300.55 – Title IX Grievance Procedure
- Policy 400.10 – Identity Protection Act

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

The chairperson declared the motion carried.

b. Approval of Procedures for Evaluating the Executive Director

Resolution
It was moved by Sheila Yousuf-Abramson and seconded by Lisa Lau that on this 22nd day of January 2025, the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board approve the Procedures for Evaluating the Executive Director, as presented or corrected:

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

The chairperson declared the motion carried.

VI. **COMMUNICATIONS**

a. FOIA Report: Two FOIA requests both from ComfyKnowledge.

VII. **BOARD ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** – The Board acknowledged and again welcomed Dr. Zipporah Hightower to the NCISC Governing Board. Board President Don Angelaccio thanked the Leadership Team for all of their hard work and thanked them for the updates.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING**

Resolution: It was moved by Sheila Yousuf-Abramson and seconded by Michelle Adams at 8:59 a.m. that the meeting be adjourned.

Voice Vote: All present voted Aye

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

The next meeting of the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 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