

**WEST NORTHFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT 31**  
**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Per SP2135 the District 31 Board Meeting was held electronically and in-person in the**  
**Field Learning Center, 3131 Techny Road, Northbrook, Illinois**  
**January 21, 2021 at 7:00PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Melissa Choo Valentinas at 7:00pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Board Members:

Present:

Daphne Frank	Virtual
Robert Resis	Virtual
Jeffrey Steres	Virtual
Maria Vasilopoulos	Virtual
Melissa Choo Valentinas	Virtual

Absent: Laura Greenberg  
Nancy Hammer

District Administration:

*Present:*

Dr. Erin K. Murphy, Superintendent of Schools  
Mrs. Catherine M. Lauria, Asst Superintendent Finance & Operations/CSBO

*Virtual:*

Dr. April Miller, Principal Field Middle School  
Mrs. Shaton Wolverton, Principal Winkelman School  
Dr. Janine Gruhn, Director of Special Education  
Mrs. Becky Mathison, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction  
Veronica Gott - EL Bilingual Coordinator  
Melissa Essig - EL/Bilingual Education Specialist - Illinois Resource Center

A quorum of the Board was confirmed by President, Melissa Choo Valentinas

## COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE

Jessica Murukurthy-

Removing the NSSED at this point would be detrimental to the kids in the pre-k program. They are not as resilient, "adaptive pause" has been challenging enough, now you want to change what few things they do know like their program, their teachers and therapists?? This will do more harm than good and don't the kids in this program have enough challenges? I really hope you reconsider removing the NSSED for the sake of a few bucks when it comes to the necessary foundation of our future generations. Doing this will result in us leaving for the program they have now. I really hope you don't do this

To: West Northfield School District 31 Board of Education

From: Nicholas "Nick" Parfitt, NSSED Parent and Community Member

Date: January 20, 2021

RE: In support of NSSED to manage the early childhood on site at Winkelman.

As a parent and family that has seen tremendous progress and success with Max as part of the NSSED program in early intervention, I cannot express strongly enough how much I support the current program and activities managed by the NSSED and SLE program on site at Winkelman.

The time, care, attention, impact and thorough work this team has put in for years is immeasurable. This team and program has demonstrated success, thoughtful engagement and results. This is what they have been doing day-in and day-out... this is their sole focus and purpose.

I do not support District 31 to assume case management and program responsibilities for the Early Childhood program for three key reasons:

(1) this will open the opportunity to erode and reallocate resources away from young families that NEED the NSSED program. Early intervention is critical to resource appropriately, and the NSSED program as currently structured at D31 ensures that. This cannot be a resource and money savings drive.

(2) this will add to the list of things the distract District 31 needs to manage, and will undoubtedly become a lower priority of focus relative to all the other challenges the District faces; COVID as a current example, there will be more in the future. NSSED has proven to focus intently on the needs of the students and the parents to ensure early success to get students on track to be successful. This is the NSSED singular focus and purpose.

(3) assuming case management of the middle school SLE program is not comparable to the needs and nuances of early childhood intervention. Early childhood development and intervention is beyond critical, and doing anything to jeopardize time and attention early on has the potential to increase the need for more middle school SLE resources.

I am supportive of exploring funding and support across other school districts to bolster NSSED at District 31 as it currently stands, but again, more strongly support the program as it is currently administered where NSSED continues to manage the early childhood on site at Winkelman.

I welcome the opportunity to deliver this message in person. Thank you for your time and support.

**PRESENTATION**

Superintendent Erin Murphy introduced Veronica Gott, EL coordinator. Our EL Coordinator, Veronica Gott, stated that she and Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn have been collaborating with Maggie Essig, Education Specialist from the Illinois Resource Center in completing our English Learner Program Evaluation.

Maggie Essig summarized the purpose of the evaluation:

- To understand how English learner students are acquiring English
- How ELs are achieving in the content areas
- The Multilingual Program's overall goals
- The Multilingual Program's specific goals
- Identify strengths and challenges of the program
- Make a plan to improve the program

Maggie Essig shared the following findings:

- Strengths:
  - Procedures and record keeping
  - Appropriate instructional materials for ELs
  - Teachers' understanding of instructional needs of EL students
  - Support for families that speak languages other than English
- Recommendations:
  - Continue to follow the clear procedures detailed in the Multilingual Program Handbook.
  - Offer training to support staff in interacting with families that speak languages other than English.
  - Make goals and values of the Multilingual Program clear for all stakeholders.
  - Review scope and sequence of EL services to ensure cohesion across grade levels.
  - When developing the ELA curriculum, include methods of differentiation and linguistic support in unit and lesson plans so that teachers do not have to start from scratch to meet ELs' academic and linguistic needs.
  - Ensure ELA and math interventions are available for EL students who need them.
  - Develop accountability measures to make sure EL students who receive services from their general education teacher are actually receiving services in addition to instruction that the entire class receives.
  - Develop longitudinal professional development opportunities for staff that build on their knowledge of EL learners. Avoid "one-and-done" workshops that do not follow up.
  - The service delivery model at Field should be investigated to make sure that it is providing students with the best possible opportunities for language growth and content learning.
  - Monitor data, both periodically and longitudinally, on EL students' acquisition of English proficiency and mastery of grade-level content.

- Action Planning Process
  - Form an action planning team
  - Focus on the priority areas
    - Review scope and sequence of EL services to ensure cohesion across grade levels.
    - When developing the ELA curriculum, include methods of differentiation and linguistic support in unit and lesson plans so that teachers do not have to start from scratch to meet ELs' academic and linguistic needs.
    - Develop accountability measures to make sure EL students who receive services from their general education teacher are actually receiving services in addition to the instruction that the entire class receives.
    - The service delivery model at Field should be investigated to make sure that it is providing students with the best possible opportunities for language growth and content learning.
    - Monitor data, both periodically and longitudinally, on EL students' acquisition of English proficiency and mastery of grade-level content.
  
- Action Planning Process - Create a 2.5 year action (improvement plan)
  - Develop a research base for each priority area
  - Identify root causes for challenges in the priority areas
  - Make actions items (tasks) that address the root causes in the priority areas
  - Identify resources available to facilitate completion of the task items
  - Create a timeline to complete action items

While a small group will develop the action plan, others will likely be brought in for input and to help complete action items.

Member Jeffrey Steres questioned how many high incidence languages were defined in our district. Ms. Essig responded that she goes by the guidelines that the State goes by which is 20 in one attendance center. Ms. Gott stated that Spanish and Mongolia are high incidences this year. In the past years Koren was as well however this year we have 18 students in Koren and closely behind them, we have 16 students that speak Russian.

Superintendent Erin Murphy thanked Maggie Essig for her knowledge and expertise to help us with our next steps.

Superintendent Erin Murphy and Assistant Superintendent of Student Services presented student services and early childhood programming for 2021-2022. Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that last year in January we adopted an intergovernmental agreement with Northfield Township to say if there is anything we can do to maximize resources and we can partner together if provided a framework. One of the topics is the Early Childhood Program.

Superintendent Erin Murphy did a review of what NSSD is:

- Special Education Coop that provides services and programs for member districts
  - Programs - North Shore Academy, North Shore Elementary, SLE, Arbor, Sail, etc.

- Services - PT,OT, Speech, Psych, Nursing, Professional Development, Coaching, etc.

Superintendent Erin Murphy did a review of what the Intergovernmental Agreement is:

- Offer specialized educational programs that target student needs by prioritizing space in school based programs, maintaining flexibility and stability for our students, and ensuring students receive services in Northfield Township.
- Committing to collaborative problem-solving with a solution-based focus.
- Foster township collaboration.
- Operate programs efficiently to maximize taxpayers' funds.
- This program allows us to keep our students close to him.

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed why the proposed plans for 2021-2022 under this service agreement is good for District 31:

- District 31 will assume more local control over student programming by taking over "Case Management" of some programs already housed in District 31. Our partner district will be doing the same thing.
- Increased options to keep students with special needs "local."
- Maintain, and even continue to improve upon, the established programming.
- Maintain partnership with NSSED (TrueNorth)
- Opportunity to revisit costs to ensure we are being fiscally responsible with taxpayer money.
- More formally continue the process that has already begun to assume case management of programs. District 31 began assuming case management of programs in 2020-2021 with the middle school Supported Learning Environment (SLE) program.

Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that this is a good time to make this transition for the following reasons:

- Action to meet recommendation of independent audit conducted by West Ed.
- We have ten preschool students moving to kindergarten in the fall
- District 30, may be opening a D30 full day program, leaving us with three classrooms.
- Intergovernmental agreement, which goes into effect on July 1, 2021, gives us a methodology for sharing programs.
- District 31 successfully created a local middle school SLE program in 2020-2021. Taking over case management of the intermediate and primary over the next years is a logical next step.

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn reviewed the current status of the cases managed by NSSED and what is managed by the district. Districts with programs that have other students from township districts would pay tuition directly to the host district.

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn summarized what programs would we assume:

- Early Childhood
  - 2AM Half Day
  - 2PM Half Day
  - 1 Full day (possibly 2, based on enrollment)

- Winkelman and District level nursing
- Supported Learning Environment (SLE) Grades 3-5
  - 1 Classroom

District 30 may be assuming case management of a full day Early Childhood Program

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn summarized the projected programs for District 31 for 2022-2023:

- SLE Grades 1-3
  - 1 Classroom
- SAIL (K-2) Host District to be determined
- Other programs and services
  - Related Services
  - LEA contracts

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn summarized the staffing needs for these programs:

- Staff to be hired locally by District 31
  - 4FTE Teachers
  - 6FTE Teacher Assistants
  - 1FTE 1:1 Teacher Assistant
  - 1FTE Program Admin/Director
  - 1FTE Clerical/office staff

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn stated that staffing needs may change based on IEP or student numbers.

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn stated that District 31 is still very much involved with NSSD and their team of people and have been and continue to be very supportive.

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn reviewed the estimated cost of the Early Childhood program.

- Projected estimated costs - \$1,053,430.51
  - Estimated costs do not reflect the offset from the following:
    - Community peer tuition (\$3,800 for half day or \$5,000 for full day).
    - Tuition from township partners utilizing EC services (half day tuition is approx \$30,000, full day tuition is approx \$45,000).
- This will be approximately \$405,000 based on projections.
- Projected savings costs over three years: \$857,601.

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn and Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed the next steps:

- Forecast meeting with NSSD on January 25 to formally discuss needs and intentions
- Post needed position
  - Hire a program Coordinator/Director to begin on July 1, 2021
  - Hire Teacher, Assistant and Administrative Assistant Positions

- Purchase materials/supplies for the classrooms
- Meet with Township Superintendents and Administrators to finalize program agreements to utilize ED and SLE programs
  - Tuition
  - Projections for program space utilization
  - Continue discussions

Member Maria Vasilopoulos questioned that if the townships schools are also creating their own programs, can we still count on the partner schools still using the services that we are taking on.

Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn stated that District 30 will possibly create their own program. The numbers show that there is still a need for programming.

Member Jeffrey Steres was District 31's representative for the month of January. He recapped the conversation at the NSSSED leadership council meeting. Much of the leadership council conversation was a little bit of a surprise to them because it was not discussed with the leadership council however as Superintendent Erin Murphy and the other Superintendent's laid out, the administration should have been aware that the intergovernmental agreement was happening. The next piece of information that was discussed was the financial hit to them about \$1.5 million dollars, which was in line with district reporting. They indicated that they would have to cut 16 staff members. What was not clear was once they had to reduce their staff, was there still a financial hit to NSSSED in the same amount? Member Steres did not believe that would be the case as NSSSED would have to adjust accordingly. There was acknowledgment across many of the leadership council members from other districts that we are not unique in taking back our own EC programming. Most of the member districts of NSSSED have already done it. They did however challenge a little bit around the one unique aspect of our plans as it was a conglomerate of township districts taking back the EC programming and not just an individual district.

Member Jeffrey Steres stated that we are a unique township. We are two communities separated by five school districts. We are not like a single community which has a single district and the students stay within their community. In order for students to stay within their community in our township, it has to be more of a township agreement. There is clear justification and rationale of why we want to do this as a township as opposed to independent districts because it would not meet the overall needs that have been laid out.

Member Jeffrey Steres stated that there was limited conversation about the impact of students and that this is where we should all focus on. Leadership Council members asked if we would be able to accomplish this by the fall, especially in light of the pandemic. This was not up for action. This is informative for the leadership council.

Member Jeffrey Steres questioned Superintendent Erin Murphy and Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn on how confident we were that we could service our students as well as or better than the services already given. Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn stated that she is confident because she

has run Early Childhood Programs in her last district and is confident in her ability to lead. Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn stated that she does not want to diminish anything that we have received from NSSD because that is a big collaboration. There is a benefit in understanding the case management of your students and the programming. It's all about students and when you understand the full picture it makes the program even stronger. So when we are creating the preschool program, there may be bumps in the road but we will be able to solve them. We will be continuing to use NSSD supports. This is good for our students and our families.

President Melissa Choo Valentinas stated that she likes the idea of bringing our students back in and being able to control the cost. The concern is being able to hire teaching assistants because it's already hard to find teaching assistants for the whole staff. Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Janine Gruhn stated that when she spoke with Lynn Clark, Director of SLE program at NSSD she had an idea if we wanted to do a LEA contract for the one on one assistants. After comparing the costs, it's a very similar cost and makes sense to plan that for the first year as we are transitioning.

Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that the next step would be to start the hiring process.

President Melissa Choo Valentinas confirmed that we have the classroom space to take this on. Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that we do have the space for them.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Secretary Daphne Frank made a motion to approve items A-I of the consent agenda.

Member Jeffrey Steres seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Maria Vasilopoulos, Robert Resis, Daphne Frank, Jeffrey Steres, Melissa Choo Valentinas

Nay: None.

The motion passed 5:0.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

Secretary Daphne Frank made a motion to approve the NorthShore Transit, Inc. Transportation Amendment. Member Jeffrey seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Jeffrey Steres, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Maria Vasilopoulos, Robert Resis, Daphne Frank

Nay: None.

The motion passed 5:0.



Secretary Dahnpe Frank made a motion to approve the fees for the 2021-2022 school year.

Member Jeffrey Steres questioned what is the specific financial impact due to the pandemic this school year and given what we know today which we know can change, what do you expect that impact to be next year?

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria, stated she would provide a brief monthly budget report and would also provide a Mid-Year Budget Report that would provide some of the details being requested. She noted that the intent of the proposed fee schedule for FY22 was to serve as a one-year adjustment due to the services and activities that parents did not have access to this year, though fees for those services and activities were paid. After next year, we would go back to figuring out fees based on the needs of the following year. This year, for next year, includes adjusting transportation fees in general and providing a sibling discount. It was presented as a two tiered fee schedule which provided a small decrease from the current year for round trip services instead of the typical increase (3%) from the contract with the bus company. Round trip would be \$700 for one student and \$500 for any other siblings needing bus services. The one-way trip was adjusted to half of a full trip, making it more affordable. The other adjustment was to take away the administrative fee on the two pay plan. Moving forward the two latter adjustments may not change as much. This seemed like the right thing to do and the time to do this seemed appropriate.

If we do have the preschool program here as a district program, fees and tuition should be added to cover items such as technology, supplies, and yearbook. The tuition reflects full or half day rates.

The special milk fee was not used as we were able to provide meals for families at no charge this year. We did not have many activities this year so the activity fee was reduced for next year to take that into account.

Many families received refunds already for transportation so the reduction for next year was limited. Additionally, based on the contract we have with NorthShore, we typically had more bus routes and more buses in use which technically they could be charging us for but they have not, so our payments have been lower. We also are bringing an amendment to the board which provides payment is 37% of the cost of what we typically pay. Our fees may be down but our billing is also down. Based on these rates and the FY20 riders that pay the fees for transportation, we typically try to get 40% of the cost from the fees and the district subsidizes the rest. If we wanted to maintain the approximate 40% we would need 84 more fee paying riders but right now our ridership is low so based this information on the FY20 ridership numbers. Much of this depends on the level of ridership and how many students we can place on each bus next year.

Member Jeffrey Steres questioned if there was a thought of keeping the fee schedule more traditional and giving families a credit to students in their now which would prevent someone from asking us a year from now why we are raising fees. Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria stated that was not taken into consideration for this report but that is always a possibility. This information is needed to enter into the system (for registration) so we were looking for a way to provide sibling discounts. What was taken into consideration was the money that was not spent this year for items such as sports, transportation for sports, after school activities, etc. It was also acknowledged that we did have additional costs due to COVID but reallocation of resources made a difference and provided some good news which Dr. Murphy would be discussing. Superintendent, Dr. Erin Murphy, explained the direction that was taken for the fees was based on the board's conversation at the December BOE meeting.

Secretary, Daphne Frank, recommended that it be very clear that it was a one year adjustment.

Member, Jeffrey Steres, asked about the net impact of the fee reductions. Assistant Superintendent, Catherine Lauria, stated that depending on the number of riders we have, the loss reported last month would be over \$50,000.

Member, Maria Vasilopolous, asked about the percentage of families that do not pay their fees. Overall, the discussion included that outside of the families that do not pay their fees due to fee waivers, there are a minimal number of families that do not pay their fees. Efforts are made in the district office to collect fees, which are typically successful.

Member Maria Vasilopoulos seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Maria Vasilopoulos, Robert Resis, Daphne Frank, Jeffrey Steres, Melissa Choo Valentinas

Nay: None.

The motion passed 5:0.

## **INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Superintendent Erin Murphy updated the Board of Education on the return to school update: [metrics/dashboard information, which included information on the current status of vaccinations.](#)

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed the planning for 2021-2022. When reviewing the structure of planning, questions were raised:

- Do we have direction for building a staffing and programming plan?
- How do we prioritize needs?
- What is our timeline?

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed the 2020-2021 status for Winkelman:

- Actual FY20 - 28 sections
- Planned FY21 - 30 sections
- Actual FY21 ( current year sections) - 39 sections
- Increase in general education TAs to meeting K/1 section needs although all positions have yet to be filled. Addition of monitors/supervisors.

Superintendent Erin Murphy shared that we re-allocated and re-assigned 7 positions in order to pay for additional sections.

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed 2020-2021 status for Field:

- Modified schedules to keep class sizes small
  - Eliminate advisory - resulted in teachers teaching 6 sections instead of 5 - loss of planning time
  - Reduced math minutes to 40 minutes to ensure we have enough sections
  - Utilized dual platform teaching - remote and in-person at the same time.
- Adjusted staffing to keep class size small
  - Hire 1 additional FTE to keep sizes small
    - Adjusted responsibilities of school librarian to take ELA and Science sections.
- How did we pay for the additional staffing?
  - Created additional sections by changing the master schedule and reducing math minutes.
  - Adjusted responsibilities of current staff.

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed the Expenses, Revenues and Savings:

- Expenses
  - Although we worked to make staffing as cost neutral as possible, some additional expenses at mid year
  - Supplies
  - Subscriptions for technology based resources
  - Technology
- Revenues
  - Original Care Act Funds of \$138,000
    - Supplies
    - PPE
    - Curriculum Work

- Additional Federal funds \$536,000 although we will get closer to \$430,000. These funds have not been expended yet.
- FEMA Funds - TBD
- Savings
  - Before and after school activities
  - Unfilled positions
  - Meals

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed agreeing on assumptions:

- Districts in Illinois will be required to have remote options for students for the 2021-2022 school year.
- ISBE/IDPH recommendations for social distancing and masking may continue into the 2021-2022 school year.
  - Vaccinations for students are not yet approved.
  - Assuming a school year of 180 days. The Board would need to decide if they wished to “purchase” up to five additional days.
  - Assuming that as staff has access to vaccines, we will see increased staffing stability.
  - Assuming that there will be ongoing impacts on academic learning and social emotional health.

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed Goals/Information to guide planning process:

- Keep the options we have right now - in-person and remote
- Maintain daily, full day in person education
- Plan for more students enrolled in in-person learning. To that end, ensure we can continue to accommodate increased in-person attendance.
- Goal to reintroduce programming that was paused. Examples include:
  - Gifted/enriched teachers
  - Interventionists
  - Enhanced ELL
- A desire to reinstate 60 minutes of math at Field Middle School
- A desire to reintroduce advisory to Field Middle School
- Continue with the instructional technology growth accelerated by pandemic
- Ensure pacing guides introduced and used by all grades for math and ELA
- Continue collaborative PLC work around standards based unit design, common assessment.

Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that for the best interest of the students, we need to provide support to our EL students as well as our ESL endorsed staff members to provide high quality EL and bilingual services.

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed what remote learning would like next year:

- Need to survey students, staff, and parents to review remote learning programs and make appropriate adjustments in terms of how the program is run.
- The structure and staffing is dependent on numbers:
  - Elementary: if there is enough in a grade to have a full remote class at every grade level, does it reduce the need for an in-person section.
  - Middle: Can we group kids to reduce the need to run a dual platform model all day.

Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that some questions have come on when we can ask people to register and commit to remote learning:

- At registration?
- Last day of school?
- July 1?

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed thinking ahead to 2021-2022 for Winkelman:

- Social distancing guidelines reduced - approximately 30 sections (does not count remote sections)
- Adherence to social distancing
  - Approximately 38 sections.
  - Does not count remote learning needs.
  - We would need to add 2-3 sections of specials to make sure we had enough for all of the sections.
- EL and SPED programming is independent of these decisions.

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed thinking ahead to 2021-2022 for Field:

- If we needed to keep sections to under 16, we must ask the following:
  - Do we want to add back the additional minutes of math?
    - We would need 3 additional math teachers
- Do we want a staffed library?
  - Then we need to hire a position to cover the sections she currently covers
- Maintain extra FTE of position hired in FY21 - The current seventh grade is a large class and may have necessitated additional section even without the pandemic.

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed thinking ahead to 2021-2022 for District:

- Do we hire for the Science Coordinator position?
- Technology Department Proposal - Upcoming is a proposal for a tech department reconfiguration (with plans on how to make it relatively cost neutral)

Superintendent Erin Murphy reviewed why it would be preferable to have a direction now:

- Thoughtful planning as opposed to last minute planning
- Deadlines
  - Timeline if we need to reduce staff - scheduled for March
  - Filling positions with highly qualified people
  - Retirements

- Current teacher shortage in Illinois/US - Searching for hard to find positions now rather than later.
- Allowing time to redistribute staff in needed positions.

Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that based on the feedback from the Board of Education, a more comprehensive plan will be presented in February. President Melissa Choo Valentinas stated that even though she welcomes questions, the Board of Education should not give direction because the Board of Education does not have the expertise. Member Jeffrey Steres suggested planning for the worse and if things get back to where we can bring back things in July, then we can. After further discussion, the Board of Education agreed to have the administration present the “worst” case scenario.

## Finance

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria, stated that the Monthly Budget Reports for December 2020 were included in the packet, however, some comments were made:

- Treasurer's report - Shows cash balance, which matches our fund balance, is \$1.4 million less than prior month, which is typical. Interest rates remain low.
- Monthly Budget Summary - This illustrates that the transportation fund shows a variation and noted that both the revenues and expenses are both lower. The other funds are fine.
- The Linear Chart - Revenues are lower as has been discussed, as tax receipts are lower than they have been in the past. Expenses are higher than budgeted to date.
- P-Card statement is available for review.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria, reviewed the mid-year budget report:

This reports on the last two years' activity through December and the current year's activity. The main items of revenue and expenses are shown to get a more detailed look.

- Revenues:
  - Property taxes show that for the current year we are at 80% where we typically are at 86%. We experienced a large refund to the taxpayer but received that back in December. The district has another refund we are to get back, as well. From this year to the prior year, we are down 15.5%.
  - CPPRT is down from the prior year but when you look at how much we collected so far from the prior years we are around 40 to 45%. Due to the economy, the CPPRT distributions may be lower.
  - Two factors that result in lower investment income. One is due to very low interest rates and the second factor is due to less money available to invest. The district did well with interest income when we had capital projects money that was not yet expended.

- Based on the main fees, we are up 2.4% from the prior year. According to our budget number for that category of revenues, it reflects 4% over budget.
- ERATE applications and recycling devices show we are up from last year by 49% and 151% percent over budget. ERATE provides rebates for internet services at a 50% rate, and Category 2 shares the costs for projects related to technology infrastructure.
- Evidence Based Funding - formally general state aid. We are lower than last year as the percentage of budget received is 4% less than prior year. This should not decrease for us but with the State's financial situation we are unsure. This uncertainty also applies to the mandated categorical reimbursements.
- Summer Food Services Program - We participated last year, this past summer, and this year. This program has been extended through the end of the year. Not knowing what to expect for this year is reflected in the 347% over budget. We have also spent \$243,000 which does not count costs from the new contract with Quest (\$35,000). Once we were able to participate in the SFSP, the cost share is helpful in covering our costs. Noting, December receipts have not yet been received.
- FEMA - Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria stated that her Assistant, Deena Gibson has worked tremendously hard to keep documentation organized for submitting for reimbursements and for any potential audit, if needed. The hope is to submit and get reimbursed for some of these costs.
- CARES ACT - This has helped us and they are coming out with a second round of funds but we do not know what it is yet so not included in any projections or budget.
- Transportation - Fees are 9.5% lower than last year and we are at 57% from the expectations from the revenue budget where previous two years we were already at 72 to 74%.
- Totals from the chart items - we are doing pretty well being up by .24%.
- Expenses:
  - The items used for the expenses on the chart are by object: salary, benefits, supplies, and transportation. The district's salary expenses are in the Education Fund and the O&M Fund.
  - At the start of the review, the salaries for the education fund were showing a 20% increase over last year but that was due to staff salaries being reallocated to regular salary accounts and allocated away from the accounts of their prior year positions. Through December, the salaries are reflecting a .13% lower than prior year. We are slightly lower but considered right in line with the percent of the budget from the last two years.
  - Benefits, another expensive item, and include items such as TRS, health insurance, IMRF. Report shows we spent less than last year by .5% percent and are right in line with the budget from year to year at approximately 40%.
  - Supplies - We have spent 54.66% of the budget for the year which is not bad because this is where we were from the two previous years but the amount spent is 12% higher.
  - Transportation - we are 29% lower compared to last year at this time because our field trips, after school activity buses are not happening and we are being

charged for the buses that we are using and not based on our original needs outlined in the contract.

- Overall, based on these line items we are 1.07% higher than last year, which is really good.

## **BOARD REPORTS**

### **The Education Foundation:**

- The Winter Benefit is not happening this year. They will determine what options they have for a community fundraising event for the spring.
- The Ed Foundation is still working with Superintendent Erin Murphy to raise \$80,000 to update equipment for a new science room at Field and art room at Winkelman.
- Pamela Marlantis led on behalf of the education foundation and the PTO a teacher and staff appreciation gift this month.

### **PTO**

- Rolling out a Spirit Wear Drive around the beginning of February. There will be several new designs to choose from. Consider a gift of Field School spirit wear for your graduating 5th grader.
- Art To Remember will be open also in February. Allowing for special gifts in time for Mother's Day Gifts and graduation.
- The Restaurant Fundraisers will continue and this month is at Naf Naf.

### **Northbrook Economic Development Committee**

- Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria, stated that they all shared what each District was doing during the pandemic and shared other news provided by the other taxing bodies, as well as a retirement within the Village.

### **NSSED**

- Outside of what has been mentioned, there was not much more to speak of other than that this is their planning season which is why the topic of what we do with EC comes up. Member Jeffrey Steres is the representative for the next two months.

## **STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

Superintendent Erin Murphy reported enrollment.

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUESTS**

- Kaza Rahn - Elected Board Information



- Ken Deloian - SmartProcure Vendor Information

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Superintendent Erin Murphy summarized the following policies:
  - Student Activities and Fiduciary Funds
  - Accounting and Audits
  - Student Fundraising Activities
  - Student Testing and Assessment Program
  - Extracurricular Activities
  - Health, Eye and Dental Examinations; Immunizations, and Exclusion of Student
  - Substitute Teachers

## Facilities Rental Information

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria, reported that our forms were updated this past year and our expectations were also updated which has helped with some of the issues we were experiencing. When we look at the use of parking lots, if someone doesn't tell us about it, we do not know that they are there. We are reaching out to one group in particular that uses it in the summer and informed them again that they need to supply us with a certificate of insurance and have to ask for an application to use the property.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria, stated that she reached out to other districts to get an idea of their experiences. She received three responses from the township districts and two from just outside of the township:

- District 109 shares property with the park district so they do not have responsibility for the usage.
- District 29 has different categories that are allowed to use their buildings and grounds, school sponsored or not school sponsored. It's free for school sponsored, and for non-school sponsored they are charged \$75.00 a day. For profit companies are charged \$150.00 per day.
- For District 65 they have minimal requests and charge custodial fees and limit the amount of outdoor space. For profit companies, they charge \$75.00 an hour per room.
- District 27 currently does not charge for outdoor space but they are updating their documentation for building use.
- District 30 which also stated that their outdoor space is not available for outdoor use and very few people request to use the building.
- Spoke with our property liability company a couple of times and provided input which was included in our updated forms.

Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated that she brought this up last time and does confirm that getting a certificate of liability would be in our best interest.

### **MOVE INTO CLOSED**

There is no closed meeting for this month.

### **ADJOURN**

Member Jeffrey Steres made a motion to adjourn. Member Maria Vasilopoulos seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Daphne Frank, Robert Resis, Maria Vasilopoulos, Jeffrey Steres, Melissa Choo Valentinas

Nay: None.

The motion passed 5:0 at 9:44PM.

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**Board President**

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**Board Secretary**

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**Date**