



Regular Meeting Minutes December 9, 2024 NPS Board of Education

Board President, Ben Purdy, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

This meeting was held at 104 S Wing St. Northport, Michigan, in room 300.

Roll Call

Members Present: Tom Wetherbee, Ben Purdy, Dan Duffiney, Ryan Blessing, and Danielle Percy

Members Absent: Jake Zimmer

A quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Moved by Tom Wetherbee, seconded by Ryan Blessing, to approve the agenda at this December 9, 2024, regular board meeting.

All Ayes

Motion Carried 5-0

Students of the Month

- Elementary: Savannah Potes, presented by Alex Post
- Secondary: Riley Sahs, presented by Carrie Wadas

Superintendent's Report

- The Dandelion Discovery Center passed their fire inspection. NPS Maintenance Director, Jim Fortin, has been working with the Center to make the updates required by the Fire Marshall. With one final State inspection, the Center plans to open on January 6.
- Regarding the snow days last week: our goal is to always be open. The most challenging part of determining if the roads are safe for school is the fact that we have students and staff living as far away as Lake Ann and Grawn. This is another consequence of the shortage of affordable housing in our area.
- The Frost & Fusion Student Art Show is up in the lobby.
- Our holiday concert is on Wednesday at 6:00pm.

Public Comments

- Kathy Sahs thanked Superintendent Wetherbee for calling the three snow days last week. She works in Traverse City and noted that the roads were terrible on those days.

- Eric Potes read a letter to the Board. In his letter, Mr. Potes detailed changes he would like to see at Northport Public School, including more athletics and school dances, a chess club, a full-time Athletic Director, and increased value of the Northport Promise Scholarship. He complimented the school on the current progress and stated his desire to become more involved in the PTO.

Consent Agenda

- Approval of November 11, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Bills Presented for Payment for \$103,702.07
- Approval of the Resignation of Dr. Barbara Conley, Board of Education Vice-President
- Approval of the Hiring of Douglas Dalzell as a substitute Bus Driver

Hearing no objections, these items were approved by consent.

Prospective Board Member Introductions

Four interested candidates attended the meeting. These candidates were each given the opportunity to provide an introduction and background information to the Board.

- Laura Cavendish: Parent of three current Northport students and regularly attends Board of Education meetings. Serves on several Boards in the area and co-founded the school's Parent-Teacher Organization.
- John Wadas: Has lived in Northport for approximately 8 years and regularly attended Board of Education meetings. Purports a unique perspective due to his wife being a teacher at the school and her previous experience as a school board member in another state. Believes the Board is meant to be a check and balance for the Superintendent, who is the expert.
- Sara Later: Has lived in Northport for five years permanently, has been visiting Northport her whole life. A lifelong educator, she spent 20 years as a high school French teacher. Parent of a former Northport student. Would love this opportunity to be of service.
- Jamie Scripps: Mother of two current Northport students. Moved to Northport in 2015 and served on the Library Board since 2022. Lawyer and former teacher with an additional master's degree in leadership studies. Supports the integration of real-world skills and academic rigor and the current direction of the Administration and Board.

Tom Wetherbee noted that all of the candidates were great and would be excellent additions to the Board. He also explained that, while the Board would use a ballot to nominate, the votes would not be anonymous because of open meeting regulations. Also, the Board must have a majority of the full Board (four votes) for a candidate in order for that candidate to be appointed.

The nomination votes were read aloud as follows:

Ryan Blessing: Jamie Scripps

Danielle Percy: Jamie Scripps

Daniel Duffiney: Jamie Scripps

Ben Purdy: Jamie Scripps

Tom Wetherbee: Sara Later

MOTION: Moved by Tom Wetherbee, seconded by Dan Duffiney, that the Northport Board of Education appoint Jamie Scripps to the position opened by the resignation of Dr. Barbara Conley. Jamie Scripps will complete Dr. Conley's term which ends December 31, 2026.

Jamie Scripps was appointed to the Northport Board of Education, effective immediately.

Board Member Acceptance & Oath of Office

The newly reelected members Thomas Wetherbee and Ryan Blessing, along with the newly appointed member Jamie Scripps, formally accepted their position as Member of the Board of Education of Northport Public School. After accepting their offices, each member took their Oath of Office. Each member signed their Acceptance and Oath of Office, and each document was notarized.

Action Items

Board Policy Update

MOTION: Moved by Tom Wetherbee, seconded by Danielle Percy, that the Northport Board of Education approve updates to the following policies, as presented:

- Po2264 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities (Technical Correction)
- Po3120.08 – Employment of Personnel for Co-Curricular/Extra-Curricular Activities (Revised)
- Po5330.02 – Opioid Antagonists (Revised)
- Po5340 – Student Accidents (Revised)
- Po5500 – Student Conduct (Revised)
- Po7440.03 - Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Technical Correction)
- Po7540.09 – Artificial Intelligence (New)
- Po8321 – Criminal Justice Information Security (Non-Criminal Justice Agency) (Revised).

DISCUSSION: NONE

Discussion

Superintendent Evaluation

Superintendent Wetherbee reminded the Board that an annual Superintendent review was mandated by the State. He noted that ongoing communication was more effective than waiting for an annual review and asked that Board members continue to communicate openly about any concerns.

Superintendent Wetherbee then presented the Board with comparative statistics from MiSchoolData. Northport Public School rates very highly among other schools in our area and shows remarkable growth as compared to our own data from the 2016-17 school year (the year prior to Superintendent Wetherbee arriving). Wetherbee went on to discuss the myriad of external conditions that inhibit our ability to grow, including lack of affordable housing for families and staff members. He made note of several initiatives he is focusing on to increase school size and improve community engagement.

January Organizational Meeting & Officer Elections

Ben Purdy reminded the Board that we will hold Board Officer elections at our Organizational meeting on January 13, 2025. He noted that we need a Vice-President due to the resignation of Dr. Conely.

Old Business

NONE

New Business

NONE

Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Wetherbee reiterated what the Board had said about having four candidates of such high quality. He thanked everyone who applied.

Public Comments

Karen Trolenberg reminded the Board of the elementary Science Club and the NASA Student Challenge as examples of the good work being done by the current administration. She also noted that we have started an elementary STEM Lab this year and that it has been going well.

Laura Cavendish gave an update on the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). She noted that the last meeting was cancelled due to a snow day, but that they hope to meet in January. They will likely have their bylaws ready to be reviewed by the Board in February. The PTO would like to have at least one event per month, with a family dance in January.

Board Member Comments

Ryan Blessing noted that the Northport Promise is currently looking for more Board members and that they are actively working to increase the scholarship amounts awarded annually.

Ben Purdy reminded everyone that the school hosts drop-in Futsal on Thursdays as a great opportunity for kids and parents to stay active and socialize.

Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Ryan Blessing, seconded by Danielle Percy, to adjourn.

Motion Passed 6-0

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Danielle Percy, Secretary

Elizabeth Schwind, Recording Secretary