

Board Notes
January 29, 2026

The regular meeting of the School Board was held Thursday, January 29, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. CST, at New Prairie United School Corporation in the Board Room with Mr. Phil King, Mr. Jason DeMeyer, Mrs. Jill Smith, Mr. Rich Gadacz and Mr. Rich Shail. Dr. Paul White, Superintendent, was also present.

Mr. Phil King, Board President, reviewed guidelines for speaking on agenda items.

There was a motion by Mr. DeMeyer, seconded by Mrs. Smith to approve the Agenda. The motion was approved 5-0.

CONSENT ITEMS

The Board approved the Consent Items:

- (A) Minutes – December 15, 2025, January 5, 2026
- (B) Financial Reports
- (C) Claims
- (D) Payroll
- (E) Personnel Report as follows:

CERTIFIED

▪ **Leaves/Resignations/Retirements**

1. Michelle Kilcoyne – FMLA Leave as NPMS Counselor beginning 4/15/2026 through 6/1/2026
2. Jacqueline Short – FMLA Leave as 5th Grade Teacher at Olive Twp. Elementary School beginning 4/13/2026 through 5/27/2026
3. Ron McVay – FMLA Leave as NPMS Social Studies Teacher beginning 1/21/2026 through 4/21/2026

▪ **Employment**

▪ **Employment – Extra-Curricular & Ancillary Duties**

1. Shannon Edmondson – Prairie View Elementary New Teacher Mentor split stipend for 2025-2026 remainder of the school year
2. Sara Harmon – NPMS New Teacher Mentor split stipend for 2025-2026 remainder of the school year

▪ **Employment – Afterschool Program**

1. Amy Wolfe – HFL Grant Sponsored “Be Your Best Club” Leader for Cooking Club for the 2025-2026 school year

▪ **Adjustments**

1. Justin Holmquest, New Prairie Middle School Principal to transfer positions to New Prairie United School Corporation Director of Finance/Assistant to the Superintendent beginning July 1, 2026 on a three-year Administrative Contract through June 30, 2029

CLASSIFIED

▪ **Leaves/Resignations/Retirement**

1. Maria Bornacelli Polo – Resignation as NPUSC Custodian effective 1/15/2026
2. Linda Palmer – Retirement as NPUSC Bus Driver effective 1/1/2026
3. Jackie Shore – Resignation as NPMS Nutritional Services Worker effective 1/23/2026

▪ **Employment**

1. Steven McBryer – NPUSC Custodian at Prairie View beginning 1/21/2026

▪ **Employment – Extra-Curricular**

1. Brittany Hughes – Olive Twp. Elementary 5th Grade Girls Basketball Coach for the 2025-2026 school year
2. Ross Strieter – NPMS 8th Grade Girls Basketball Head Coach for the 2025-2026 school year

▪ **Adjustments**

1. Mike Barnes, NPUSC Maintenance Staff, promotion to Assistant Director of Facilities/Maintenance Specialist, moved to salary position at \$70,000 effective 1/1/26

REPORTS

(A)

Superintendent's Report

- Dr. White reminded the audience that 4 of the 5 approved eLearning days have been used. There is one more allowed eLearning day before the students will need to make up days at the end of the year.
- Dr. White announced Mr. Justin Holmquest who has been Principal at the Middle School since 2018 and has done wonderful work there, who will be NPUSC Director of Finance/Asst. to the Superintendent beginning July 1, 2026. Dr. White read highlights from the statement he will put out about Mr. Holmquest regarding his successes and growth in his leadership accomplishments earning him this position.
- Mr. Holmquest thanked the Board and Dr. White for this opportunity. Mr. Holmquest stated that coming to New Prairie was his single best professional decision he has ever made. He stated he is very grateful for this opportunity. Mr. Holmquest concluded by thanking his staff for all their hard work and support over the years.
- Dr. White concluded by stating that Mr. Holmquest will finish out the year at the Middle School.

(B)

Legislative Report

Mr. King gave the following Legislative report:

Mr. King stated that this year is a short session and a non-budget year for Indiana legislators, but as usual, there are a number of education bills moving through the Statehouse. All bills must pass out of committee by Thursday, January 29th.

Mr. King briefly highlight several bills the corporation is monitoring:

- **HB 1034 and SB 78** address student use of cellular phones and personal devices. These bills would ban cell phones, personal laptops, smartwatches, and similar devices during the full school day, requiring that any instructional technology be school-issued. **SB 78** would allow schools either to ban devices entirely or to provide locking storage cases at the district's expense for the entire school day.
- **HB 1086** has been advanced out of the House Education Committee on Tuesday which would allow, but not mandate, school districts to display the Ten Commandments in classrooms and elsewhere - but teachers would be prohibited from reading it aloud in front of students. School libraries would be required to keep a copy of the Ten Commandments, and students would be allowed to cite the text in their work without consequence. This bill passed along party lines.
- **HB 2059** would allow school districts to display commercial advertising on school buses, with certain restrictions.
- **HB 1158 and SB 88** would require public schools to teach the positive outcomes of earning a high school diploma, obtaining employment, and waiting until marriage to have children. Senate Bill 88 passed the Senate on January 21st.
- **HB 1160** would require schools to administer the U.S. naturalization exam to eighth-grade and high-school students and would make passing the exam with a 70% score a graduation requirement.

- **HB 1176** would require parental notification when a school determines a student is at risk of not achieving grade-level understanding in mathematics. This bill passed out of committee on January 22nd.
- **HB 1232** would require public schools to teach the Bible as literature in every grade from kindergarten through 12th grade. Instruction would include age-appropriate lessons on the history of Israel, moral and ethical teachings of the Old and New Testaments, and the life of Jesus, while explicitly prohibiting instruction of the Bible as religious dogma or divinely inspired text.
- **HB 1313** would prohibit public schools, excluding charter schools, from hiring lobbyists. It would also prohibit payroll deduction of union dues and prevent school districts from converting to virtual instruction days for planned or coordinated staff absences related to protests.
- **SB 124** would lower the mandatory school attendance age from 7 to 5 years old.
- **SB 248** would have changed the South Bend Community School Corporation Board of Trustees to an advisory-only board under a new governing body appointed by the Indiana Secretary of Education. While Senator Rogers has withdrawn this bill at this time, we are continuing to monitor the session closely to ensure this or similar legislation does not resurface unexpectedly.

Mr. King concluded by explaining that these are just a handful of the education bills the Board is tracking at this point in the legislative session.

- (C) **Roanna Hooton, Director of the New Carlisle Olive-Township Library Report**
 Ms. Hooton provided handouts to the Board members then gave an update of the New Carlisle Olive-Twp. Library on what has been happening with the Library in the last year. She concluded the report by thanking the Board for their support.

ACTION ITEMS

- (A) The Board accepted and adopted the 2nd Reading of NEOLA Updated Board Policies for Special Update July 2025; Volume 38, No 1 Nondiscrimination September 2025; Volume 38, No. 1 September 2025 as listed:
- Bylaw 0142 Election & Eligibility to Serve-Revised
 - Bylaw 0144 Compensation – Revised
 - Bylaw 0167.2 Executive Session - Revised
 - Po 1422 Nondiscrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Anti-Harassment – DS – Replacement Policy
 - Po 1422.02 Nondiscrimination Based on Genetic Information of the Employee – Rescinded
 - Po 1662 Anti-Harassment – Rescinded
 - Po 2221 Mandatory Curriculum – Revised
 - Po 2260 Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity - Revised
 - Po 2260.01 Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability – Revised
 - Po 2266 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities - DS – Revised
 - Po 2410 Audio, Video, and Digital Recording of Meetings – Adopt
 - Po 2414 Reproductive Health and Family Planning and Human Sexuality Instruction – Revised
 - Po 2416 Student Privacy and Parental Access to Information – Revised
 - Po 2461 Recording of IEP Team Meetings/Case Conferences – Revised
 - Po 2623 Student Assessment – Revised
 - Po 3122 Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity - Revised
 - Po 3122.02 Nondiscrimination Based on Genetic Information of the Employee - Rescinded
 - Po 3231 Outside Activities of Staff – Revised
 - Po 3362 Anti-Harassment – Rescinded
 - Po 4122 Nondiscrimination and equal Employment Opportunity - Replacement

- Po 4122.02 Nondiscrimination Based on Genetic Information of the Employee – Rescinded
 - Po 4162 Drug and Alcohol Testing of CDL License Holders and Other Employees who perform Safety-Sensitive Functions - Revised
 - Po 4362 Anti-Harassment – Rescinded
 - Po 5111 Determination of Legal Settlement and Eligibility for Enrollment of Students Without Legal Settlement in the Corporation; Proof of Indiana Residency - Revised
 - Po 5200 Attendance – Revised
 - Po 5223 Released Time for Religious Instruction – Revised
 - Po 5350 Student Suicide Awareness and Prevention – Replacement Policy
 - Po 5517 Anti-Harassment – Revised
 - Po 5517.01 Bullying – Revised
 - Po 5600 Student Discipline – Revised
 - Po 5610 Suspension and Expulsion of Students – Revised
 - Po 5611 Due Process Rights – Revised
 - Po 5771 Search and Seizure – Revised
 - Po 6320 Purchasing – DS- Revised
 - Po 6550 Travel Payment and Reimbursement/Relocation Costs - Corporation Revised
 - Po 7440.01 Electronic Monitoring and Recording – Revised
 - Po 7455 Accounting System for Fixed Assets - Revised
 - Po 7540.02 Digital Content and Accessibility – DS – Revised
 - Po 8121 Personal Background check – Contracted Services – DS – Technical Correction
 - Po 8405 Environmental Health and Safety Issues Indoor Air Quality, Animals in the Classroom, and Idling Vehicles on School Property – Technical Correction
 - Po 8452 Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) – Revised
 - Po 8462 Child Abuse and Neglect – DS – Revised
 - Po 8500 Food Service Program – Technical Correction
 - Po 8600 Transportation – Corporation Revised
 - Po 8600.01 Student Safety in Transporting – Revised
- (B) The Board accepted Conflict of Interest Statements
- (C) The Board approved Old Checks to be Voided
- (D) The Board approved NPUSC 2026 Summer School/Camp Dates
- (E) The Board approved Overnight Field Trip Request
- (F) The Board approved Repairs/Upgrades to NPHS Baseball Field
- (G) The Board approved Repairs/Upgrades to NPHS Softball Field
- (H) The Board approved the NPUSC School Calendar for 2026-2027
- (I) The Board accepted the following donations:
- Rolling Prairie Elementary School received a donation of a Hacienda lunch for staff Peepers glasses as well as gift cards to be provided for Bingo night from Peepers
 - New Prairie Middle School staff received a donation of 15 dozen Assorted Donuts valued at \$179
 - NPHS Model United Nations received a donation of \$500 from the Lebbin Law Office
 - NPUSC Nutritional Services Angel Fund received a donation of \$600 from Kappa ho Chapter of Delta Theta Tau Sorority of New Carlisle
- (J) The Board approved the Agreement for Educational and Training Program between The Redevelopment District of St. Joseph County and NPUSC
- (K) The Board approved the updated Job Descriptions:
- NPUSC District English Language Learner Coordinator/TOR Job Description
 - Cougar Connect- Virtual & Hybrid Student Support Specialist
 - Elementary Instructional Assistant

DISCUSSION ITEMS

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. King stated that the next Regular School Board Meeting will be held at the Central Office in the Board Room on February 23, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. King asked if the Board had any further business. The Board had no further business to discuss. The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.