

Board Notes
February 23, 2026

The regular meeting of the School Board was held Monday, February 23, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. CST, at New Prairie United School Corporation in the Board Room with Mr. Phil King, Mrs. Jill Smith, Mr. Rich Gadacz and Mr. Rich Shail. Dr. Paul White, Superintendent, was also present.

Mr. Jason DeMeyer was absent.

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

There was a motion by Mrs. Smith to amend the Agenda adding Action Item I to Approve the Gibson Insurance renewal, seconded by Mr. Shail. The motion was approved 4-0-1.

There was a motion to approve the Amended Agenda by Mrs. Smith, seconded by Mr. Shail and approved 4-0-1.

CONSENT ITEMS

The Board approved the Consent Items:

- (A) Minutes – January 29, 2026
- (B) Financial Reports
- (C) Claims
- (D) Payroll
- (E) Personnel Report as follows:

CERTIFIED

▪ **Leaves/Resignations/Retirements**

1. Jason Clemons – ECA Resignation as Elementary Athletic Coordinator effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year
2. Arlene Zarate – Retirement as NPHS Mathematics Teacher effective 6/30/2026
3. Chrystal Wilkinson – Retirement as NPHS English Teacher effective 6/30/2026
4. Jennifer Hite – ECA Resignation as NPMS Guiding Coalition Committee Member effective 6/30/2026
5. Kristen Barden – ECA Resignation as Academic Super Bowl Sponsor effective 6/30/2026
6. Mark Glassley – Retirement as NPHS Industrial Arts Teacher effective 6/30/2026

▪ **Employment**

1. Shawn Sherwood – New Prairie High School Building Trades Teacher beginning 7/1/2026 pending criminal background check results

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

1. Chrystal Wilkeson – NPHS New Teacher Mentor for Semester 2, 2025-2026 school year
2. David Dailey – NPHS Head Boys Track Coach for the 2025-2026 school year

▪ **Employment – Afterschool Program**

▪ **Adjustments**

1. Teachers receiving New Prairie Education Foundation/Amazon Grant for Classroom supplies for semester 2 in the amounts ranging from \$140 to \$500 are:
 - David Dailey
 - Ron McVay
 - Erin Sass
 - Shalon Emmons-Kirkwood
 - Susan French
 - Kara Mamazza

- Elizabeth Hayden
- Cassie Pavey
- Sarah Huff
- Kristen Kleist
- Dedrae Smiley
- Krissy Surma
- Ashley Hernandez
- Heather O'Connell
- Sharon Bashaw
- Lisa Pietrzak
- Sandra Ernst
- Amy Schilla
- Laura Schreiber
- Aislin Zwierzynski
- Catherine Saylor
- Kim Stepp
- Rachel Ralston

CLASSIFIED

▪ **Leaves/Resignations/Retirement**

1. Sophie Cauffman – Resignation as Prairie View Elementary Instructional Assistant effective 2/3/2026
2. Renee Chojnacki – Resignation as Prairie View Elementary Health Aide effective 2/20/2026
3. Tonya Kleine – Resignation as NPUSC Custodian effective 2/16/2026
4. Riley Mortensen - Resignation as NPUSC IT Building Technician effective 2/27/2026
5. Stephanie Bladecki – Medical Leave as Nutritional Services Worker beginning 2/2/2026 through 4/13/2026

▪ **Employment**

1. Tonya Kleine – NPUSC Custodian starting at NPUSC beginning 2/2/2026
2. Russell Boren – NPUSC Custodian starting at NPUSC beginning 2/16/2026
3. Brian Sparkman - NPUSC Custodian starting at NPMS beginning 2/10/2026
4. Elizabeth Snyder – NPUSC Cougar Connect Virtual & Hybrid Student Support Specialist starting 3/2/2026 pending criminal background check results
5. Kaytlyn Burton – NPUSC Full Time Nutritional Service Worker beginning 2/24/2026

▪ **Employment – Extra-Curricular**

1. Taylor Bisping – Rolling Prairie Elementary School 5th Grade Girls Basketball Coach for the 2025-2026 school year pending criminal background check results
2. Shaunna Tewell – NPUSC 9th Grade Girls Basketball Coach for the 2025-2026 school year
3. Phillip Oudhuis – Rolling Prairie Elementary Wrestling Coach for the 2025-2026 school year
4. Kevin Macias – NPUSC Co-Head Girls Wrestling Coach for the 2025-2026 school year
5. Jacob Pinter - NPUSC Co-Head Girls Wrestling Coach for the 2025-2026 school year
6. Cody Downs – NPMS Co-Assistant Boys Wrestling Coach for the 2025-2026 school year
7. Mark Stone – NPUSC Assistant Boys Track Coach for the 2025-2026 school year
8. Joshua Szuba – RPES Asst. Wrestling Coach for the 2025-2026 school year
9. Jared Emmons – NPUSC Assistant Varsity Baseball Coach for the 2025-2026 school year

▪ **Adjustments**

1. Justyna Oldham, NPUSC Bus Driver, to add a Rolling Prairie Elementary School Route to her High School/Middle School Route.

REPORTS

(A)

Superintendent's Report

- Dr. White congratulated the Wrestling Program for an outstanding showing at the state tournament this past weekend. He exclaimed his pride in the students and coaching staff! All four students competing placed in the top 5 in the state with MJ Staples winning his second consecutive state championship. Coach Whitenack and staff have New Prairie wrestlers competing against some of the largest schools in the State of Indiana.

(B)

Legislative Report

Mr. King gave the following Legislative report:

We are rapidly approaching the end of the 2026 legislative session. By law, the session was scheduled to conclude on Friday, March 13. However, because legislators reconvened two weeks early in an unsuccessful attempt to advance redistricting, the session will now end this Friday. All remaining bills must be voted on by then.

Last Thursday marked the deadline for bills to move out of committee in order to remain eligible for consideration.

Of the 753 bills introduced this session, 90 (12%) were education-related. As of February 16, only 34 of those 90 bills remained active. Below are the education bills I am continuing to monitor:

SB 25 – School Board Candidates

This bill establishes the order of candidate names on school board ballots as follows:

1. Candidates affiliated with a major political party
2. Independent candidates
3. Nonpartisan candidates

Rather than listing candidates alphabetically (which must have been difficult for our State legislatures), names will appear in the order in which candidates filed for office.

The bill has passed both the Senate and the House and was signed by the President of the Senate on February 19. Once signed by the Governor, it will take effect immediately.

SB 78 – Wireless Communication Device Policy

This bill prohibits students from using wireless communication devices during the school day, including passing periods and lunch (a “bell-to-bell” ban). It also:

- Expands exceptions to include IEPs, medical conditions, and language translation needs
- Requires schools to adopt either a no-device policy or a storage policy
- Requires the Indiana Department of Education to publish model policy language and implementation guidance

The bill passed the Senate by a 28–19 vote. The House added several amendments, including:

- Allowing “other exceptions” at the superintendent’s discretion
- Adding “Out of Sight at All Times” language, permitting phones to be stored (turned off) in a backpack, as locally defined

The amended version passed the House and will move to a full vote. If approved, it must return to the Senate author, who has indicated he will request removal of the backpack amendment and a motion of dissent will be filed which will trigger a conference committee to be formed.

The bill’s author has stated that appropriate storage options would include lockers or secured storage devices, at a school’s discretion. Secured storage devices could be funded through a portion of the Secured School Safety Grant or other available funds.

SB 88 – Identity Instruction and Teacher Licensing Exemptions

This bill requires public schools to incorporate instruction emphasizing:

1. Obtaining at least a high school diploma and additional workforce training
2. Securing full-time employment
3. Waiting until marriage to have children
It also:
 - Requires state educational institutions to accept Classic Learning Test scores for admission consideration
 - Allows teacher candidates in alternative pathways to request a waiver of the state licensing exam and substitute ACT, SAT, Classic Learning Test, or GRE scores

The bill passed the Senate and is awaiting a full vote in the House.

SB 124 – Age for Compulsory School Attendance

This bill would have lowered the mandatory school attendance age from 7 to 5. It did not pass out of committee and is considered dead.

SB 199 – Various Education Matters

This bill:

- Establishes new provisions regulating minors’ access to social media
- Expands state oversight of early literacy outcomes
- Requires schools with fewer than 75% (increased from 70%) of students passing the state reading assessment over three consecutive years to implement specified interventions aligned with the science of reading

The bill passed the Senate 46–2. The House amended and passed it 67–28. However, the Senate did not agree with the House amendments, and a motion to dissent was filed. A conference committee has been formed and will meet Tuesday morning to attempt to reach agreement. If no agreement is reached, the bill will die.

HB 1059 – Commercial Advertising on School Buses

Did not pass out of committee; considered dead.

HB 1160 – Citizenship Exam Requirement for Graduation (8th Grade and High School)

Did not pass out of committee; considered dead.

HB 1086 – Display of the Ten Commandments

Did not pass out of committee; considered dead for this legislative year.

HB 1176 – Parental Notification (Mathematics Proficiency)

Requires parental notification when a student is identified as at risk of not achieving grade-level understanding in mathematics.

The bill passed both the House and Senate with amendments and is currently awaiting final House concurrence.

HB 1242 – School Corporation and Charter School Reporting

Requires the Department of Education to compile a statewide report on school corporations and charter schools, including enrollment, performance, and population data, along with recommendations to improve administrative efficiency and reduce costs.

It also requires the Department of Local Government Finance to study operational funding disparities.

The bill passed both chambers with amendments and is currently awaiting final House concurrence

ACTION ITEMS

- (A) The Board accepted Donations:
- Olive Twp. Elementary School received the following donations:
 - Gloves for students in need from Miller’s Merry Manor
 - Hygiene products for students in need from “Residents of the Town of New Carlisle
 - NPHS Robotics Team received the following donations:
 - Cedar Lane Stables, LLC - \$250
 - Rose Lenig - \$5,000
 - Dwyer - \$250
 - Kirby Risk - \$750
 - Kabelin Ace - \$500
 - Monosol - \$750
 - All Star Autos - \$100
 - Paul’s Construction Company, Inc. - \$500
 - Compressair - \$250
 - Reuer - \$1,500
 - NPMS received donated hygiene items, snacks and food items for students and families in need from Jessica VanWanzeele
- (B) The Board approved the 2027 Budget Calendar
- (C) The Board approved the New Prairie Athletic League & Rolling Prairie Ball Association Agreements for 2026
- (D) The Board approved the Renewal of the Frontline Education Quote
- (E) The Board approved the Overnight Field Trip Requests
- (F) The Board approved the Closure of all NPUSC Classes, K-12, to Out of District Transfer Students through the end of the 2025-2026 School Year
- (G) The Board approved the Renewal of PowerSchool SIS Maintenance and Support for NPUSC for the 2026–2027 contract term

- (H) The Board approved the Updated NPUSC Transportation Training Agreement
- (I) The Board approved Gibson Insurance Renewal

DISCUSSION ITEMS

BOARD COMMENTS

- Mrs. Smith congratulated the Wrestling Team on their successful year and congratulations to the four students who advanced to state competition and the successes they had.
- Mr. Shail congratulated the Swim Team and their sectional accomplishments. Mr. Shail then recognized the HS Show Choir congratulating them on their successful year. Mr. Shail added that to all New Prairie's extracurricular activities "well done"!
- Mr. King announced that the "Public Let's Talk Session" will be held March 16, 2026 and the next Regular School Board Meeting will be March 23rd. Both meetings will be held at the Central Office in the Board Room 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 6:28 p.m.