

Board Notes
September 28, 2026

The regular meeting of the School Board was held on Monday, September 28, 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 approve the Agenda, seconded by Mr. Shail. The Agenda was approved 4-0-1.

There was a motion to suspend the regular meeting for the

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HEARING

Mr. King opened the floor to members of the New Prairie Classroom Teacher Association and the New Prairie United School Corporation pursuant to Indiana Code 20-29-6-1(a), Indiana Code 20-29-6-1(b), and Indiana Code 20-29-6-19 regarding teacher compensation and collective bargaining.

NPUSC Science Teacher Mrs. Kimberly Holifield addressed the Board regarding the NPUSC teacher contract and the State of Indiana's funding. She expressed concern about last year's bargaining and stated teacher salary compression should not be addressed through veteran teachers receiving less of a raise. She noted that while the changes provided higher starting pay for newer teachers last year, they resulted in disadvantages that devalue veteran educators.

There was no further public testimony at this hearing pursuant to Indiana Code 20-29-6-1(a), Indiana Code 20-29-6-1(b), and Indiana Code 20-29-6-19 regarding teacher compensation and collective bargaining.

There were no comments made from the Board.

PUBLIC HEARING ON AMENDMENT TO LEASE

Consideration of Resolution Re-Approving the Building Corporation, Authorizing Execution of the Eighth Amendment to Lease, and Approving the Issuance of Bonds and Related Matters.

There were no comments from the audience or Board members.

The Board agreed to close the Public Hearing and resume the Regular Meeting of the Board.

CONSENT ITEMS

The Board approved Consent Items:

- (A) Minutes – August 24, 2026, August 31, 2026
- (B) Claims
- (C) Payroll
- (D) Financial Reports
- (E) Personnel Report

CERTIFIED

- Leaves/Resignations/Retirements
 - 1. Susan French – Intermittent FMLA Leave as NPMS World Language Teacher beginning 9/3/2026 through 9/3/2027

2. Garrett Curless – ECA Resignation as NPMS Assistant Girls 6th Grade Basketball Coach effective 9/16/2026
3. Taylor Emmons – ECA Resignation as Olive Twp. Elementary Volleyball Coach effective 8/5/2026

- Employment

1. Krissy Surma – Rolling Prairie Elementary School Homebound Instructor 3 to 5 hours of instruction per week for a RPES student beginning 8/31/2026

- Employment – Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular/Ancillary Duties

1. Taylor Emmons – Olive Twp. Elementary School Student Council Sponsor beginning 2026-2027 school year
2. Aimee Litka – NPMS 6th Grade Girls Assistant Basketball Coach beginning 2026-2027 school year
3. Sandra Ernst – Prairie View Elementary Principal Designee beginning 2026-2027 school year
4. Kelle Cartwright – HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
5. Shannon Rypma - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
6. Jennifer Smith - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
7. Joe Hurt - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
8. Ashley Duschek - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
9. Kari McLaughlin - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
10. Shalon Kirkwood - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
11. Andrew Maez - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
12. Krissy Surma - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
13. Cassie Pavey - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
14. Cheryl Karczewski - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
15. Lisa Smiertelny - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
16. Taylor Emmons - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
17. Laura Schreiber - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
18. Casey Gumm - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
19. Jarrett Spence - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
20. Sara Serry - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
21. Matthew Kirkwood – College Bound Cougar Mentor for the 2026-2027 school year
22. Sabrina Scroggin - College Bound Cougar Mentor for the 2026-2027 school year
23. Jessica Sinka - College Bound Cougar Mentor for the 2026-2027 school year
24. Joseph Beachey - College Bound Cougar Mentor for the 2026-2027 school year
25. Drew Lutz - College Bound Cougar Mentor for the 2026-2027 school year
26. Emily Huff - College Bound Cougar Mentor for the 2026-2027 school year
27. Jenn Smith – NPMS Student Council Co-Sponsor beginning 2026-2027 school year
28. Amy Bauer – NPMS Student Council Co-Sponsor for the 2026-2027 school year
29. Jessica Williams – NPMS New Teacher Mentor for the 2026-2027 school year
30. Jessica Williams – NPMS Spirit Club Sponsor beginning 2026-2027 school year
31. Joseph Hurt - NPMS New Teacher Mentor for the 2026-2027 school year
32. Amy Barnard – NPHS Tabletop Gaming Club Sponsor beginning 2026-2027 school year

- Adjustments

1. Adrienne Hurt, NPHS Art Teacher, to receive a \$50.00 stipend for the Naviance Professional Development Training

CLASSIFIED

- Leaves/Resignations/Retirements

1. Aubrey Hall – Resignation as Olive Twp Elementary Instructional Assistant effective 9/12/2026
2. Hannah Shoue - Resignation as Rolling Prairie Elementary Instructional Assistant effective 9/4/2026
3. Elizabeth Snyder – Resignation as NPHS Cougar Connect Support Specialist effective 9/25/2026
4. Gretchen Krivak – ECA Resignation as NPHS Girls Freshman Basketball Coach effective 9/9/2026
5. Johanna Pickett – Intermittent FMLA Leave as NPUSC Bus Driver beginning 9/14/2026 through 9/13/2027

6. Emily Kampf – FMLA Leave as NPUSC IT Systems Administrator beginning 9/18/2026 through 11/16/2026
7. Richelle Kmak – FMLA Leave as Payroll Specialist beginning 10/15/2026 through 1/7/2027

▪ **Employment**

1. Ashley Coen – Rolling Prairie Elementary School Instructional Assistant start date pending criminal background check results
2. Savannah Sterry - Rolling Prairie Elementary School Instructional Assistant start date pending criminal background check results
3. Kimberly VanTuyl – Olive Twp. Elementary School Instructional Assistant start date pending criminal background check results
4. Gabriel Williams – NPUSC Custodian at Olive Twp. Elementary School starting 9/29/2026
5. Brianna Wilhelm – Rolling Prairie Elementary School Instructional Assistant start date pending criminal background check results
6. Angelia Pease – NPUSC Part-Time Floating Food Service Worker start date pending criminal background check results

▪ **Employment – Extra Curricular**

1. Robert Smith – NPHS JV Boys Basketball Head Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
2. Joshua Roberts – Prairie View Elementary School 5th Grade Boys Co-Basketball Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
3. Eric Edmondson - Prairie View Elementary School 5th Grade Boys Co-Basketball Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
4. Kelli Smith – NPHS Robotics Assistant Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
5. Angie Deutscher - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
6. Erin Sass - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year
7. Stefanie Leffert - HFL Be Your Best Teacher for Semester I of the 2026-2027 school year

▪ **Adjustments**

1. Tina Balanow, NPUSC Bus Driver, to take on an additional Prairie View Route in addition to the current HS/MS Route.
2. Jamie Lau, NPUSC Bus Driver, switched from her current Bus 83 HS/MS Route to Bus 32's HS/MS Route

REPORTS

- Superintendent's Report
 - Dr. White congratulated students and staff for their work and effort that went into iLearn results recently published that were positive for our school corporation as it is tied to more rigorous standards.

ACTION ITEMS

- (A) The Board accepted the following donations:
 - NPUSC Food Service Program received donations of \$3,750 from Keystone Cooperative-Propane and \$3,750 from the Land O'Lakes Foundation to pay towards the Lunch Debt
 - NPHS received the Natural Helpers Grant in the amount of \$12,000
 - NPHS Model UN Club received a monetary donation from the Hannewyk family
 - NPUSC received an HFL Grant in the amount of \$300,000 from the Health Foundation of LaPorte to use for community involvement in activities for Swimming, Walking, Pickleball, Tennis, Soccer, and Baseball.
- (B) The Board approved and adopted the 2027 Budget and Resolution for Appropriations and Tax Rates
- (C) The Board adopted the 2027 Capital Projects Fund Plan and Resolution
- (D) The Board adopted the 2027 Bus Replacement Plan Resolution
- (E) The Board approved The New Prairie Teacher Growth and Appraisal Process
- (F) The Board approved the NPHS Baseball Field Fence Replacement

- (G) The Board approved Overnight Field Trip Requests
- (H) The Board approved the Revised Joint Agreement between the South LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative & NPUSC
- (I) The Board approved Closing All NPUSC Schools to Out-of-District Transfer Students effective October 2, 2026, through the end of Semester 1
- (J) The Board approved a Temporary Teacher Contract
- (K) The Board approved the Agreement with the Midwest Area School Employees' Insurance Trust for 2027
- (L) The Board approved the Purchase of EZActivity Trips Software for the Transportation Department
- (M) The Board approved an Updated Job Description
- (N) The Board approved the Software Subscription for Fund View
- (O) The Board approved the Resolution Re-Approving the Building Corporation, Authorizing Execution of the Eighth Amendment to Lease, and Approving the Issuance of Bonds and Related Matters

BOARD COMMENTS

The Board members congratulated students and staff on the iLearn results Dr. White reported on.

Mr. King announced that the next regular meeting of the School Board will be held at the Central Office in the Board Room at 6:00 p.m. CST, October 26, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. King asked if the Board had any further business. The Board had no further business to discuss. The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.