Board Notes
October 26, 2026

The regular meeting of the School Board was held Monday, October 26, 2026, at New Prairie United School Corporation 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 not present

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

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

CONSENT ITEMS

The Board approved the Consent Items as follows:

(A) Minutes – September 28, 2026
(B) Financial Reports
(C) Claims
(D) Payroll
(E) Personnel Report:

CERTIFIED

- **Leaves/Resignations/Retirements**
  1. Kezia Peck – Resignation as Olive Twp. Elementary 4th Grade Teacher effective 12/18/2026
  2. Lauren Dyer – ECA Resignation as Prairie View Elementary School Student Council Sponsor effective 9/28/2026
  3. Lori Rose – Intermittent FMLA Leave as NPMS 6th Grade Math Teacher beginning 10/23/2026 through 11/20/2026
  4. Sydney Zeier – Intermittent FMLA Leave as NPHS Language Arts Teacher beginning 8/28/2026 through 8/27/2027
  5. Kalie Archuleta – Resignation as Prairie View Elementary 4th Grade Teacher effective 12/31/2026
- **Employment**
- **Employment – Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular/Ancillary Duties**
  1. Ron McVay – NPMS 6th Grade Assistant Boys Basketball Coach beginning 2026-2027 school year
  2. Madison Coates – NPHS FFA Sponsor retroactive beginning 2025-2026 school year
  3. Kristen Kleist – RPES Co-Boys Basketball Coach beginning 2026-2027
- **Adjustments**
  1. Sarah Binder, currently Olive Twp. Elementary Interventionist, to voluntarily transfer to Olive Twp. Elementary 4th Grade Teacher starting Semester 2 of the 2026-2027 school year.

CLASSIFIED

- **Leaves/Resignations/Retirements**
  1. Brian Williamson – FMLA Leave as Grounds Maintenance Worker beginning 11/18/2026 through 2/18/2027
  2. Cindy Pardy – Retirement as IT Building Technician effective 12/31/2026
  3. Rebecca Galvan – Resignation as NPMS Secretary Treasurer effective 10/28/2026
  4. Austin Amor – Termination as NPUSC Bus Mechanic effective 10/22/2026
  5. Katelynn Scheffer – Resignation as RPES Instructional Assistant tentatively effective 12/8/2026

- **Employment**
    1. Heidi Johnson – NPUSC Bus Driver beginning 10/26/2026

- **Employment – Extra Curricular/Co-Curricular**
    1. Michael Nelson – NPMS 7th Grade Boys Basketball Head Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
    2. Justice McGhee – NPMS Assistant 7th/8th grade Boys Basketball Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
    3. Dennis Siddall – RPES Co-Boys Basketball Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
    4. Joe Mitchell – NPHS Co-Assistant Boys Swim Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
    5. Gabriel Boggs – NPHS Co-Asst. Swim & Dive Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
    6. Rachel Johnson – NPHS Girls 9th Grade Basketball Coach for the 2026-2027 school year
    7. Bryce Bloode – NPHS 9th Gr Boys Basketball Coach for the 2026-2027 school year pending criminal background check results
    8. Austin Price – NPHS Asst. Wrestling Coach for the 2026-2027 school year

- **Adjustments**
    1. Nutritional Services Department is transitioning the following employees from Site Coordinator to Nutritional Services Manager effective 10/29/2026 with the following wage increases:
        - Lisa Whalen at Rolling Prairie Elementary with a $3.00 per hour wage increase
        - Kala Gerencser at New Prairie Middle School with a $5.00 per hour increase
        - Pam Boonstra at Olive Twp Elementary with a $3.00 per hour increase
        - Michelle McVay at New Prairie High School with a $3.85 per hour increase
        - Desira Daley at Prairie View Elementary School with a $4.00 per hour increase
    2. Angela Keehn, NPUSC Bus Driver, one day suspension unpaid 10/12/2026
    3. Erin Sass, NPMS Social Worker, to receive an $800 base salary increase, with a $1,000 one-time stipend.
    4. Stephanie Callahan, NPHS Social Worker, to receive an $800 base salary increase, with a $1,000 one-time stipend.
    5. Deb Spite, NPHS World Language Teacher, to receive a $500 base salary increase, adjunct teacher contract for 2026-2027 school year.
    6. Toree Friedrich, Rolling Prairie Elementary School Building Secretary to transfer positions to IT Building Technician beginning 1/4/2027.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

- Dr. White congratulated the success of NPUSC Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular Activities and sports rounding out the fall. He also congratulated the High School Band who qualified for the third year in a row for State competition. Dr. White recognized and congratulated two NPHS runners, Braden Bachmann and Janice Felker who qualified for state finals.
- Dr. White gave a shoutout to ArtFX out of Bridgman, MI, for the excellent work on the new signage in the Board Room.
- Finally, Dr. White mentioned that there is a recommendation for both classified compensation and the ratification of the 2026-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement between NPUSC and NPCTA Inc. following the completion of the bargaining process with the NPCTA Inc.

ACTION ITEMS

(A) The Board accepted the following donations:

- Journey Church donated the following:
    - $300 to Rolling Prairie Elementary School for items needed
    - $300 to Prairie View Elementary School for items needed
- NPUSC received $4000 from Lifewise Academy for the Thanksgiving Meal fund

(B) The Board approved the renewal of the Easy Clocking Subscription

(C) The Board approved the Transportation Department's Replacement Drug and Alcohol Testing Provider

(D) The Board approved the Updated Classified Employee Handbook

(E) The Board approved the Classified Employee Hourly Raise as follows:

A .50 cent raise per hour for all classified hourly employees. Raise eligibility- the classified employee had to be employed at NPUSC on 1/1/26 and employed on the date of ratification.

In addition, the administration recommends the following one-time stipends, with eligibility based on years of service in a qualifying position based on the board approved start date through June 30, 2026:
One to Ten years of service to NPUSC- one time stipend of $500
Eleven to Twenty years of service to NPUSC- one time stipend of $1000
Twenty-One years plus service to NPUSC- one time stipend of $1500

(F) The Board approved the Ratification of the 2026-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement between NPUSC & NPCTA Inc.

(G) The Board approved Bus Replacement for 2027

(H) The Board approved the Renewal of Microsoft Education Enrollment Solutions Agreement

(I) The Board approved the Emergency Repairs to the Stadium Lights at Amzie Miller Field

(J) The Board approved the District Goals for 2026-2027as listed below:

Growth & Closing Achievement Gaps

During the 2026–27 school year, New Prairie United School Corporation will increase the percentage of students performing at or above grade level by at least 10%, as measured across standardized assessments, with particular attention to students who are below grade level and those experiencing achievement gaps.

Family & Community Partnerships

By June 1, 2027, New Prairie United School Corporation will strengthen the partnership between schools, students, families, and the community by creating a more consistent, engaging, and accessible communication presence that extends the culture of learning beyond the classroom. NPUSC will increase the frequency and quality of communication through the district Facebook page and individual school Facebook pages, while introducing new communication formats through the district's digital newsletter during the 2026–27 school year, including a NPUSC Vodcast and other digital communication tools. These efforts will intentionally highlight student learning, student accomplishments, classroom experiences, school activities, opportunities for family involvement, and the people who make up New Prairie Schools.

The goal is to move beyond simply informing families and the community about what is happening to help them understand, celebrate, and participate in the learning and work of NPUSC.

Communication, Alignment & Trust (Culture Audit)

By June 1, 2027, NPUSC district leadership (Superintendent, Assistant (to the) Superintendent, Curriculum Director and Board) will strengthen district-wide communication, leadership alignment, and collaborative trust so that teachers, building administrators, and district administrators have a shared understanding of district priorities, the reasoning behind major decisions, their respective responsibilities, and how their work contributes to student success.

NPUSC will establish and consistently use common communication practices that ensure important information is timely, clear, consistent, appropriately shared, and accompanied by the "why" behind significant decisions, while continuing regular opportunities for staff input, questions, disagreement, and follow-up through monthly discussions.

(K) The Board approved a Job Description Revision for NPMS Library Assistant/Administrative Assistant

DISCUSSION ITEMS

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. King read a statement from Indiana Department of Education regarding Teacher Compensation Notice for school year 2025-2026:

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) notified New Prairie United School Corporation (NPUSC}, **after bargaining had been completed this fall for the 2026/2027 school year with the New Prairie Classroom Teacher Association, Inc. (NPCTA),** that for the 2025/2026 school year, **63.2% of applicable state tuition support was allocated to qualifying teacher compensation, below the new 65% minimum required under Indiana Code 20-28-9-28(a).** However, the corporation did meet the state's funding floor requirement, which protects against overall reductions in full-time teacher salary spending below the prior year's level.

The 2025-2026 school year marked the first time the state increased the minimum teacher compensation requirement from 62% to 65%. At the same time, the additional state funding provided to our Education Fund was minimal, at approximately $51,226, well below what the legislature had indicated we would receive. This left little new revenue available as we negotiated teacher compensation agreements and addressed other financial obligations. This combination made meeting the increased threshold challenging.

It is important to emphasize that not meeting the 65% benchmark was not intentional. Based on the information available to us at the time, we believed that NPUSC had met the 65% requirement and had actually exceeded it slightly. After being notified that the reported calculation did not meet the benchmark, we began reviewing the figures to determine what may have contributed to the discrepancy. We are currently investigating whether certain benefits or other qualifying compensation may have been inadvertently omitted when reporting our Form 9 to the IDOE, or whether the IDOE's calculation excluded some of the compensation we reported. We are working to better understand the discrepancy and identify any necessary corrections or adjustments.

Despite these financial constraints, our teachers received raises, and we are taking steps this fall to reach the 65% benchmark during the 2026/2027 school year. One of those steps is reducing transfers from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund, allowing more resources to remain available for educational purposes and qualifying teacher compensation.

The result was also influenced by staffing and benefit-related changes during the past school year. As teachers retired or left the corporation, some positions were absorbed or restructured, affecting how resources were allocated and categorized under the state's calculation. Additionally, changes in healthcare obligations beginning in January 2026 affected the corporation's overall financial commitments.

It is important to understand that the state's calculation is based on specific definitions of qualifying teacher compensation and applicable tuition support. Therefore, the reported percentage reflects not only teacher compensation, but also staffing decisions, benefit obligations, and how expenditures are classified under state reporting requirements. As we

continue reviewing the reported figures, our goal is to ensure that all eligible compensation is accurately accounted for and that we take the necessary steps to meet the state's benchmark moving forward.

Our commitment remains clear: support our teachers, manage taxpayer resources responsibly, and meet the state's compensation requirements while maintaining the financial stability necessary to serve our students. We have already begun making adjustments and will continue evaluating opportunities to reach the required benchmark while balancing our broader educational and financial responsibilities.

Mrs. Smith, Mr. Shail and Mr. Gadacz all echoed Dr. White's congratulations to the students and staff of New Prairie.

Mr. King stated that the next regular Board Meeting will be held at Rolling Prairie Elementary School on November 23rd 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 6:38 p.m.