

**NOTE: These are “proposed” minutes and will not be approved until the April 18, 2023 School Board Meeting**

4:00 p.m.  
Administration Center

Tuesday  
March 21, 2023

### **BOARD MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER-President Kate Hummel called the March 21, 2023 meeting of the Board of School Trustees to order at 4:00 p.m. Present were Mr. Eash, Mr. Varner, Mr. Anderson and Mr. Mast. Others in attendance included Dr. Jayson Snyder, Superintendent, Josh Yoder, Assistant Superintendent, Jeff Palmer, Director of Buildings and Grounds and Mr. Shelly, MCS attorney.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT-Dr. Snyder introduced Sandy Hillman, Director of Early College at the Center of Excellence and Leadership Learning at the University of Indianapolis and Steve Combs who is the Senior Coordinator of the program. Ms. Hillman explained that Northridge High School recently completed the rigorous process to become endorsed. Only 50 high schools out of the 400 in the state have completed this process. Today they are here congratulating the ASPIRE leadership team of Drew Wood, Summer Runyan, Julie Shyposki, Heidi Wood, Bridget Griffin, Sherry Sheppard, Nicole Swanson, Rebecca Loar, Melissa Lucas and Jayson Snyder. Mr. Combs congratulated the work from the leadership team.

Dr. Snyder introduced Band Director Mr. Varner who announced that the band has their annual pancake breakfast fundraiser this Saturday that combines performances from the Middle School and High School bands. An ensemble of Riley Rudd, Preston Miller, Jason Yoder, Rhyan Otto, Ian Varner and Josh Yoder played a wonderful Pirates of the Caribbean medley.

#### EXPRESSIONS FROM PATRONS –

Mr. Tim Shelly, Board Attorney shared a public statement that was released Monday evening: Traditionally, Middlebury Community Schools refrains from publicly commenting on the specifics of staff disciplinary matters. However, the emerging social media campaign spreading misinformation concerning a terminated school bus driver has forced Middlebury Community Schools to provide this statement, containing facts to dispel what can only be described as intentionally misleading rumors.

First, the disciplinary action taken against the bus driver is in no way related to his religious beliefs or practices. Again, the bus driver’s religious beliefs, his role as a leader in a local church or his religious practices did not factor, in any manner, into the termination of his employment. The reason for that termination was his repeated and continued failure to interact appropriately with young, female students. Several efforts by Middlebury Community Schools to redirect the bus driver through progressive discipline, designed to correct his objectionable behavior, proved unsuccessful.

Specifically, on May 17, 2022, the bus driver offered a female middle school student a book as a gift and the bus driver instructed the student to phone him on his private cell phone number after reading the book. The female student reported to school employees that she felt uncomfortable by the bus driver’s gift giving and sharing of his phone number. At that time, school administrators verbally warned the bus driver.

Five months later, the parents of two female, fourth grade students filed a formal complaint about the bus driver to Middlebury Community Schools. They stated that he appeared, unannounced, on a Friday evening, December 16, 2022, at one girl's home to present gifts to the two female students, whom he referred to as his "special helpers." At that time, the bus driver offered to drive one of the girls to her home in his private vehicle, a practice prohibited by school policy. Middlebury Community Schools reprimanded the bus driver in writing and directed him to avoid any inappropriate interactions with students in the future.

Then, on Friday, March 10, the bus driver was observed by another school employee with a female second grader sitting on his lap while waiting to release the riders to enter the school building. School bus video confirmed that the student sat on the bus driver's lap for nearly ten minutes, while he intermittently stroked her hair, laid her head on his chest, either smelled or kissed her head and rested his chin on her head. The bus driver's conduct was unacceptable and violated the written directive given to him just three months earlier.

Middlebury Community Schools will take all reasonable measures to protect students. Sometimes employees fail to recognize appropriate boundaries when interacting with students. When the circumstances warrant, Middlebury Community Schools attempts to correct that failure by providing the employee with specific instructions and directives. When an employee continues to fail to abide by those directives and again steps over those boundaries, Middlebury Community Schools must take disciplinary action. After viewing the video evidence, it is clear that the bus driver violated the directives. The school district cannot allow any employee, regardless of his or her community status, to behave improperly with students.

Middlebury Community Schools offers this statement to provide facts to our community and demonstrate that it is taking correct disciplinary action. No further comments will be made about this personnel matter.

Jessica Jones- Expressed thoughts on the transportation issue.

Linda Garty- Expressed thoughts on the transportation issue.

Cindy Nisley- Expressed thoughts on the transportation issue and shared concerns about Stable Grounds.

Amy Grabill- Expressed thoughts on the transportation issue.

Jarrett Garty- Expressed thoughts on the transportation issue.

Aaron Scholl- Expressed thoughts on the transportation issue.

Amy Brinks- Expressed thoughts on the transportation issue.

#### CONSENT AGENDA –

- Minutes from March 7, 2023 School Board Meeting & Executive Session
- Personnel
- Donations
- Claims
- February 2023 Financial Report

**EMPLOYMENT:**

**Northridge High School**

**CERTIFIED:** Angela Black, Long Term Substitute – Art  
**Replacing:** Julie Shyposki  
**Start Date:** March 20, 2023

**Northridge Middle School**

**CLASSIFIED:** Christine Glover, Cafeteria Worker, 3.5 hrs/day  
**Start Date:** March 22, 2023  
**CLASSIFIED:** Stephanie Myers, Yearbook  
**Start Date:** March 22, 2023

**York Elementary School**

**CERTIFIED:** Brianna Nannet, Temporary 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher  
**Replacing:** Taylor Brickner  
**Start Date:** March 13, 2023

**RESIGNATION:**

**Northridge High School**

**CLASSIFIED:** Michelle Willey, Registrar  
**Effective Date:** April 10, 2023

**Northridge Middle School**

**CLASSIFIED:** Laura Heiner, Cafeteria Worker, 4 hrs/day  
**Effective Date:** March 30, 2023

**Heritage Intermediate School**

**CERTIFIED:** Kari Dyer, Principal  
**Effective Date:** June 30, 2023

**York Elementary School**

**CERTIFIED:** Sarah Stipe, Special Education Teacher  
**Effective Date:** May 26, 2023

**RETIREMENT:**

**Heritage Intermediate School**

**CLASSIFIED:** Pam Roberts, Custodian  
**Effective Date:** March 31, 2023

**TRANSFER:**

**Transportation**

**CLASSIFIED:** Corrine Conway, Bus Driver Trainee, to:  
**Bus Driver**  
**Effective Date:** March 22, 2023

## **EMERGENCY LEAVE:**

**Administration**

**CLASSIFIED: Liz Phillips, Corporation Registrar  
Thursday, March 16, 2023**

## **LEAVE 3430:**

**Northridge High School**

**CERTIFIED: Tracy Wogoman, Math Teacher  
2023-24 School Year**

Mr. Anderson moved to approve the consent agenda as presented Mr. Mast seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

### **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BID FOR NMS ROOF PROJECT-**

Dr. Snyder stated bids for the Northridge Middle School Roof Project were opened on Tuesday, March 14. We are requesting board approval for the lowest bidder. The bid has been shared with board members. Jeff Palmer provided additional details and answered questions that board members might had.

Mr. Eash moved to approve the bid for NMS roof project as presented Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

### **CONSIDER APPROVAL TO PROMOTE ONE NHS ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL TO ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL-**

Dr. Snyder stated we are seeking board approval to promote NHS Assistant Principal Jaime Nathaniel to Associate Principal. In addition to her regular duties, Mrs. Nathaniel is overseeing the credit recovery efforts at NHS. Mrs. Nathaniel has been mentoring other admins while successfully serving in her fifth year as an Assistant Principal at NHS. Mrs. Nathaniel recently began leading a professional development initiative for teachers at Northridge High School as they work collaboratively to promote high quality, research-based practices for classroom instruction. We are thrilled to have Mrs. Nathaniel leading our NHS teachers through this reflective process. She is passionate about supporting our amazing educators and she truly values the way ongoing, relevant professional development and increased teacher collaboration can help us improve how we best serve our students and support each other.

Mr. Mast moved to approve the promotion of one NHS Assistant Principal Mr. Varner seconded the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

### **CONSIDER APPROVAL TO PROCESS AND RELEASE CLAIMS AS NEEDED-**

Dr. Snyder stated we are seeking board approval to process and release claims as needed. This is something we typically request during any upcoming month that has only one board meeting, and it allows us to carry out routine business as necessary.

Mr. Varner moved to approve to process and release claims as needed Mr. Eash seconded the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

### **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF DONATIONS-**

Dr. Snyder stated we are recommending the approval of the following donations. We have a donation of \$500 from Angelo Brown to support any unfunded student lunch accounts at NMS. Trine University donated \$750 to NHS in honor of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners of their recent

math competition. Finally, Middlebury Boys & Girls Lacrosse is donating \$3,000 to be used for the Athletic "Hudl" program subscription.

Mr. Eash moved to approve the donations as presented Mr. Eash seconded the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS- None

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FIELD TRIPS-Mr. Yoder reviewed the list of field trips with the board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE-Dr. Snyder thanked the band students and their director for the performance. Congratulations to the early college team on the recognition. Congratulations also to Mrs. Nathaniel on her new title. Spring break begins March 31<sup>st</sup> and I hope it will be an opportunity for our educators and all of our staff to have some well-deserved time with their family and friends and be refreshed when we come back. We are so grateful for all you do. Finally, there was a statement that was put on social media with a list of incredible accomplishments. You know, we always have incredible accomplishments, but it just seems like the last two weeks this list of things were related to academic competitions and fine arts and music. I couldn't even begin to list them all or I might leave one out. I just think we have amazing things happening in the school district and it takes a whole community so teachers, staff, parents and students, thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF TRAVEL-Josh Yoder reviewed the list of travel with the board.

EXPRESSIONS FROM BOARD MEMBERS –

Mr. Anderson-I feel like Dr. Snyder said it all.

Mr. Eash-I enjoyed watching the band. For somebody who could never carry a tune in a bucket, it is amazing to see these young kids bring their musical attributes to school. Mr. Varner has such enthusiasm especially with the pep band at the basketball games. He brings it and it is really cool to see.

Mr. Varner-I'll just say our family has been involved in the band program at Northridge Middle School and High School for years. They are such good students and good children. The community they build together is incredible. Derek will have lifelong friends because of his time in the band at the middle school and high school, my other kids do as well. I am so thankful for the program.

Mrs. Hummel-My family attended our first ISSMA competition Saturday. Our son is a 7<sup>th</sup> grader and the quality of our middle school band was really impressive. It was definitely a great day to be a Raider! We are doing some great things. To Mrs. Nathaniel, I know last year was bonkers in a lot of ways and I know you played a very active role in helping transition to get through that year and I appreciate that. Congratulations again on your promotion, that is exciting. To all of our staff heading into the fourth grading period, finish strong. We have done such amazing things and it has been such a good school year and we have a lot to be excited about. We have all of our spring events coming up. Enjoy your break then let's get back and go at it.

OTHER BUSINESS-Dr. Snyder shared that all three of the award winning choirs are performing on Thursday night. Come out and see those performances!

ADJOURNMENT –

Mr. Eash moved to adjourn the March 21, 2023 school board meeting Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 5-0 at 5:05p.m. The next scheduled school board meeting will be on March 21, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. at the Administration Center.

---

Kate Hummel, President

---

Gregg Eash, Vice President

---

Mike Varner, Secretary

---

Donald R. Anderson, Member

---

Caleb Mast, Member