

2022-23 District Family Update No. 18 | Feb. 17, 2023

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Greetings, Northfield School District Families:

Thanks once again for your continued support. Today's update includes a vital information about the school district's budget process, our PLC gallery walk, and implementation of the Crisis Go app.

Semester Professional Learning Community Gallery Walk

Seventy-nine (79) district PLCs across seven schools participated in an end-of-semester "gallery walk" on Feb. 8, 2023.

Why it matters

- PLCs set measurable goals at the beginning of the year to improve student learning. Teachers use strategies intended to positively influence student outcomes.
- The "gallery walk" provides an opportunity to share goals, strategies, and results with the rest of the PLCs in the school. Each educator who participated was asked to offer feedback to at least five different PLCs through a Google Form.
- Over 1,500 individual feedback forms were submitted and will be shared with the PLC teams.

Crisis Go App & Homeland Security Emergency Procedure Analysis

The district is implementing the Crisis Go app to improve communication in emergencies. The app includes immediate access to the district's crisis plan, allows for immediate mass communication, and centralizes offsite attendance when evacuation is needed.

Additionally, the district is scheduled to meet with a representative from Homeland Security to review our emergency and crisis plans. This service is free to schools and offers expert analysis to improve our response in the case of a true emergency.

District Priority Based Budgeting Timeline 2023

The Northfield School District is experiencing declining enrollment and chronic state underfunding. The district made a substantial budget adjustment in 2022 to address these fiscal issues from a position of strength. The district's financial management has been recognized, including earning the AA+ bond rating from Standard & Poor's — very few school districts in the state have achieved a better bond rating than Northfield. However, we need to continue taking action to maintain the district's commitment to stewardship and maintain a financially responsible system. The current budget reduction target is \$2.5 million for 2023-24.

Why will there be budget reductions?

- **Declining enrollment continues to be a serious problem.** This year, we have 245 fewer students than in 2018-19. This decline has resulted in approximately \$2.45 million less revenue this year.
- **The state has not kept up with inflation.** The state provides approximately 70% of the district's revenue each year. Since 1990, there have been only a few years when the increase in the general education revenue formula has equaled or exceeded the inflation rate. If the state had increased the formula with the inflation rate, the district would have \$6.7 million more in revenue this year.
- **Inflationary pressure is real.** One example is our property insurance premium was proposed to increase by \$50,000 this year. The replacement value of our property increased by \$62 million over the last year to \$315 million.
- **Special education cross-subsidy.** The special education cross-subsidy is the amount of money the district spends on required (and morally imperative) services for students with disabilities that are not reimbursed (as promised) by the state or federal governments that are responsible for the mandates. Northfield's cross-subsidy is approximately \$5 million annually. The special education cross-subsidy is a stark example of how underfunded state and federal mandates force budget reductions at the local level.

What about the capital projects levy passed in November? Or the state legislature providing more funding?

- The district's capital projects levy was renewed and expanded in Nov. 2022. As shared during the levy campaign, most of these funds are used to pay for maintaining and improving facilities and grounds and purchasing materials and equipment to support students and staff. A portion of the funds will relieve pressure on the general fund by paying the salaries and benefits of eligible technology services staff.
- The state legislature has proposed several bills to provide schools with additional funds. Because the state funds schools based on enrollment, any current proposed bills that may become law would still not provide enough relief to the general budget. While we hope our enrollment stabilizes in the coming years, we will make necessary changes to ensure the long-term financial health of the school district.

What is the timeline?

Here is the budget timeline.

- a. Jan. 23: financial forecast presented to the board
- b. Jan. 24-Feb. 22: the district's leadership team develops reduction proposals based on the 2022 budget prioritization team's priorities.
- c. Feb. 23: initial list shared with staff members and in the board packet.
- d. Feb. 27: budget reduction list presented at the board meeting.
- e. March 13: Board meeting
- f. March 16: Public hearing

- g. March 23: Public hearing
- h. April 10: Board authorizes budget reduction package
- i. May 8: Board general fund budget presentation
- j. May 22: Board approves general fund budget for 2023-24

Board update

The school board held a regular meeting on Feb. 13. The board packet & table file are [located on our website](#). A [video](#) of the **regular meeting** is available on our website and you can [listen](#) to my recap of the meeting on KYMN radio.

Thank you!

As always, we are grateful for your trust. Thank you for your partnership in your student's education.

Sincerely,



Matt

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Superintendent

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