The Board of School Trustees of the Nettle Creek School Corporation met in a work session on May 6, 2026 at Hagerstown Elementary LGI Room.
The following board members were present: Shaun Lieberman, Ruthie LaMar, Julie Blaase, Cody Sankey, and Sandra Schraub. Guests present were: Glen Meek, Jason Bulmer, Scott Snodgrass, Jordan McCaslin, Belinda Locke, Maria Tinkle, Chrisina Neuman, Heather Lugar, Missy Burns, Paige Johnson, Madilyn Coomes, Abby Klein, Peggy Muller, Bruce Swallow, Dan Davis Jr., Lisa Bane, Dottie Shedd, Hannah Arnold, and Laynie Vinson.

CALL TO ORDER OF BOARD MEETING

The regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees was called to order by Mr. Lieberman at 6:31 p.m. at Hagerstown Elementary LGI Room.
Mrs. Schaeffer certified compliance with the open meeting law.

WORK SESSION

Mr. Lieberman stated this work session is to discuss revenue and expenditures of the. 2026 Budget and future years. Mr. Lieberman started off the meeting with some follow-up items from the last work session.

Mr. Lieberman stated a comment was made that the cost of food for the concession stands have increased around 20-25%, have we increased the prices to reflect those increases? Mr. Snodgrass stated he has on the items that have increased.

Mrs. Schraub followed up to a statement from the last work session regarding how a lot of talk was around the Elementary school and not the High School. Mrs. Schraub ensured that everything is on the table and no final decisions have been made at this time.

Mr. Lieberman asked a question about the paid time off (PTO) days teachers currently receive. He recalls making the adjustment and understands that this contributes to the costs of subs which is a cost to the corporation having to pay the teacher and the sub. Mrs. Schaeffer stated this is a huge perk to the teachers having all of their time off in one bucket essentially. Nettle Creek is significantly higher than the state average. Mrs. Schaeffer stated this is something that would have to go through the bargaining unit to change back to the different types of days.

Mr. Sankey asked for more information regarding school meals to follow up to a comment made at the last work session. Mrs. Schaeffer stated that the lunch fund is self-sustaining. No money from the Education or Operations budget is used to pay for Chartwells.

The board began discussing the transportation costs around vocational students. It costs approximately $33,000 to transport the current eight to ten students to the Career Center. Board members discussed ride share where other students can car pool together. Mrs. Schraub asked what other schools currently offer to get their students to the Career center. She asked if they offer transportation and if they charge anything to those students. It was clarified that Nettle Creek only transports students to New Castle Career Center. Any students that are in the broadcasting program in Knightstown has to find their own transportation to that site.

Mr. Lieberman recalled the school having a mini-van at one time. He was not sure of the regulations using one of those to transport students. Mrs. Schaeffer stated that we wouldn't have to look into the regulations, still have a driver's license on file, the individual still be run through our insurance, etc. Mrs. Schraub asked about looking into the cost to maintain a vehicle versus utilizing a rental car? A board member asked Mr. Bulmer why the full-size bus of a morning and in the afternoon while a mini bus runs the mid-day route. Mr. Bulmer stated it was driver preference.

Mr. Lieberman mentioned the cost for transportation for athletes. Mrs. Schaeffer stated it was more challenging to get a bigger picture as we transport for other things than just athletics; however, for last school year, there were approximately 300 trips. The base line trip is 4 hours is paid at a rate of $71.92. That would be a total cost of $21,576 if all 300 trips were four hours but some were longer. Mrs. Schraub asked if we evaluate all ECA's, would the same $10 cost for athletics also be charged to ECA's who use transportation?

The board asked a question regarding fuel, how many gallons are used, etc. Mr. Bulmer stated that fuel cost is so volatile right now. However, it would be something to look into to have it contracted so the price is locked in for so many months. This would make it easier to estimate fuel costs for events.

Mrs. Schaeffer stated that the break even for charging students is necessary, gives a little revenue to relieve the operations budget, but, does the cost become a barrier for students to not participate. Mr. Snodgrass does what he can and covers the cost for the ones

that are unable to pay currently. Mr. Lieberman believes if the cost is increased to $20 is not unreasonable. Mr. Snodgrass did state that he could work with students who are not able to participate to work a shift in concessions or taking tickets in order to pay the transportation fee. Mr. Lieberman did state that not everything should fall on the parents. Maybe look at how often new jerseys and such is being purchased and not purchase them for an extra year or two.

Mr. Bulmer believes some money could be cut out of the repair accounts as they have two newer trucks and the newer buses. Not as much maintenance is needed, which is potential savings. The older buses do cost more to maintain.

Mrs. Schaeffer stated more potential savings could be found on the natural gas bill. The February bill was three times more than normal. A three-year analysis was completed and if we were a part of the consortium, we could have saved $55,000 in those three years. Mrs. Schaeffer did state that the amount is not guaranteed as the price fluctuates. The same with energy, we can look at ways but it is challenging to put a number on paper.

Mr. Lieberman stated we have touched on custodial and would like to discuss that further. He understands we have some part-time positions, and maybe we can evaluate these positions for improvements. Mrs. Schaeffer believes we have gotten too comfortable when we had open positions we filled them. Mr. Sankey asked how many custodians we have. Mrs. Schaeffer stated this is a hard question to answer as we have some that do multiple roles such as two roles are also bus drivers and one of those is also an instructional assistant. We also have a bus driver who drives a mid-day route. We have five part-time custodian positions, plus two student workers and eight full-time custodian's corporation wide. Mr. Lieberman would like to compare to other schools and track all staff in FTE to compare to other schools including the square footage each custodian is responsible for.

Mr. Bulmer stated that each head custodian is also responsible for some minor repairs to save on calling someone else in to fix the issue. Mrs. Schraub asked if it would be beneficial to utilize work-based learning students. Mrs. Schaeffer stated we could utilize work-based learning students and Mr. Bulmer is working on those job descriptions.

Mr. Sankey asked what can be improved and be more efficient? Mr. Bulmer stated that sometimes you have to spend money to save money when it comes to repairs. There is no savings in waiting as it could cost more but some time we have no choice but to wait. Mr. Lieberman stated last year or so we were having the same conversations due to overspending and some has already been streamlined. Mr. Bulmer sated they are trying to avoid calling contracts as often and they can only cut so much before you cannot maintain.

Mrs. Schaeffer stated that she wanted to clarify that the Technology budget is not completely in the operations budget. Some of it is in the education budget. Things that are used for educational purposes like licensing and software comes from the education budget. Things like copiers, licenses that are not used for the students comes from the operations budget. Mr. Albert is working hard to make cuts and has made significant gains, however, we are still evaluating.

Mr. Albert stated he sold the old devices and made approximately $72,000 in revenue. Mr. Albert reviewed all software and licenses and has saved $19,000 in a year. Mr. Albert also went out to bid for the internet and was able to save money as well. There are other things like our student data system that we cannot go without but also increases approximately 2% each year, ParentSquare, multi-factor authentication, etc. things are expensive but we need. Mr. Albert stated we spent approximately $91,000 in software last year and we have spent $80,000 this year.

Mr. Sankey asked how many staff members are in the Technology department. Mr. Albert stated he has an assistant at each building and then himself. Mr. Albert provided some stats that they have performed 176 chromebook repairs since January 1st. Mr. Lieberman asked if the repairs seemed normal or higher. Mr. Albert stated that with chromebooks, he expected the breakage to increase. Mr. Albert and his staff have reminded teachers and talked to classes about taking care of their devices.

Mrs. Schaeffer followed up with some items from the last work session. Transportation drivers cost the corporation approximately $382,000 as a whole, that includes field trips, ECA trips, etc. Mrs. Schaeffer stated she and Mr. Bulmer are really trying to avoid overtime but sometimes it is unavoidable. The professional development model is in house. We have internal professional development from 7:30 am to 8:15 with NIET. The Master Teachers take the lead on the weekly training for all teachers.

Mrs. Schaeffer touched on class sizes at the Jr. Sr. High School and explained how difficult it is to right size classes due to diploma requirements. Mr. McCaslin stated that if we get class sizes to the correct size, then we will not be able to offer as many other options for electives for students in the future.

Mrs. Schaeffer recommended they only right size for what we need to financially currently; then, in future years, evaluate things before hiring and right sizing classes in the future.

Mrs. Schaeffer reviewed the administration positions. To answer the question about savings, Mrs. Schaeffer stated she will be recommending she not take her contracted pay increase that is in her contract come July. She will recommend to stay at the current rate, which will be cost savings to the corporation.

Mrs. Schaffer did state that they want to determine decisions sooner rather than later. By no means do they want to rush this decision but she would like to communicate the decisions to staff soon.

Mr. Sankey asked what steps are needed to get the decision made? Mr. Lieberman stated once aligned and agreed on recommendations, we can move forward. Mrs. Schaeffer stated that we would need to work with legal counsel on the certified positions that will be cut. No public approval will be made prior to staff being notified.

Mr. Lieberman opened the floor for the public to speak.

Mrs. Bane stated her biggest concern is right sizing five sections in one year.

Mr. Meek stated that we all have to own and be part of this. He would like to see a decision be made that will not destroy the culture of the school and that they know not everything is fair.

Mrs. Klein (6th grade teacher), stated that within her two years, she is already comfortable with the material. The talk of possibly having a teacher float around year to year would be extremely difficult.

Mr. Swallow stated that he has really enjoyed the NIET training and feels like it has made him a better teacher even after 25 years teaching. However, it does cost a lot of money and he feels like it is more of a luxury. With the times we are being faced with, he would like everyone to think if this is something really worth spending money on right now. He would like to see classes be kept smaller to keep teachers around and to really put the pencil to the paper.

Mr. Lieberman thanked those that spoke for their input. Mr. Lieberman asked Mrs. Schaeffer next steps. Mrs. Schaeffer stated that an Executive Session needs to be planned so they can discuss things futher and hopefully make some decisions.

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Signed _____ _____ _____

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