



NSSEO Governing Board Brief

June 6, 2018

Engage. Connect. Grow.

NSSEO Shining Star: Co-Teaching Model gives students a language to communicate together at Riley School in District 21.



The NSSEO Governing Board recognized a special co-teaching partnership between NSSEO Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Teacher, Mr. Damien Charo and First Grade District 21 Teacher, Ms. Paris Abel. The shining star was Soha Faisal, a first grader at Riley School who is deaf and uses hearing aids and an interpreter to assist in her communication. Mr. Charo and Ms. Abel transformed the first grade classroom at Riley school by teaching all students how to communicate with Soha using sign language. Sign language was used across academic domains, as well as the social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum. Mr. Charo and Ms. Abel's efforts to teach sign language to the students underscores the critical values of collaboration, acceptance and understanding. Through the co-teaching classroom, Soha has been able to develop authentic friendships and build greater social skills through shared communication focus with her peers. Soha shared with the NSSEO Governing Board what this experience has meant to her as a young learner. She shared how important her friendships are to her and how much she loves Riley School. These inclusive opportunities provide our incredible young learners with the important tools and support necessary to continue to grow and excel.

Dedicated Retirees Recognized

The NSSEO Governing Board recognized the Retirees of 2018: Judy Argol, Nancy Gorecki, Mary Kowalski, Martha Polen, Judy Bergman, Nayana Patel, Robert Parotto, Kim Dungan, Cathy Williams and Greg Hill. These dedicated staff and leaders have devoted 181 collective years of service to NSSEO. NSSEO has been so fortunate to have had their passion, knowledge and experience for decades and wish them the best in their future adventures. Click the link to see the video that was created for our retirees.

[RETIREMENT VIDEO](#)

FY19 NSSEO Budget Approved

NSSEO FY 19 NSSEO Budget was ratified at the June 6th Governing Board Meeting after a directed vote of each member district. Budget reserve recommendations were also approved with funds dedicated towards the replacement of windows at Kirk School, pursuing a buy-down of NSSEO's IMRF rate, and earmarking additional funds for the Timber Ridge School Gym/Elevator project.

NSSEO Governing Board Reelections

The board re-elected the current president and vice-president of the NSSEO Governing Board for a second term; Janice Krinsky from District 59 as President, and Anna Klimkowicz from District 211 as Vice President. Both board members have dedicated many years to the NSSEO Governing Board and their leadership and involvement in committees, events and celebrations reflect their ongoing commitment to the important roles they hold for the organization.

Professional Learning Update reflects Stakeholder Needs

Annually, the NSSEO Professional Learning Department sends out a needs assessment in order to gather information from stakeholders which informs upcoming offerings, programming, services and professional learning supports within NSSEO and its member school districts. 728 educator surveys and 583 parent surveys were analyzed. The survey results from educators highlighted four main priorities: Social Emotional Learning, English Language Arts Curriculum/Instruction, Math Curriculum/Instruction and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). The themes that emerged from compiled parent surveys were: proactive behavior management strategies, transition planning and process, strategies to increase effective executive functioning skills, community agency resources and connections and tools to address anxiety. NSSEO will use the survey results to design and customize professional learning series, embedded with coaching supports, which include assignments and on-site coaching to assist in the implementation of practices and to build capacity in the identified areas.

New Leaders Bring Passion and Experience to New Roles



The NSSEO Governing Board approved three Administrative positions at the recent meeting.

Miner School: Focus groups with stakeholders, coupled with a thorough and rigorous interview process resulted in the recommendations and approval of a new leader for Miner School, Mr.

Erik Brekke. Erik brings a strong integrated background in special education and applied behavior analysis, along with collaborative, engaging interpersonal skills. Erik's diverse talents, extensive teaching and coaching experience and passion and dedication for students with special needs will continue the customized special program at Miner. Erik Brekke, with Alison Dauernheim as Assistant Principal, will lead a great team and continue the excellent work and student growth at Miner School.



Kirk School: Last week, Jen Browning was approved as the Assistant Principal for Kirk School and will focus her leadership role on the secondary and transition levels. Jen began her career at NSSEO as an ESP and then served as a teacher at the secondary level for five years, and for the past years, as a co-teacher in special education in District 59. Jen's education and depth of experience, committee work, enthusiasm and passion for students through a person-centered approach will be a great addition to the leadership team at Kirk School

who will lead an incredible staff to continued efforts and evolution on behalf of special students.



Coordinator of Satellite Programs and Services: Molly Dunne was approved as the new Coordinator of Satellite Programs and Services after a rigorous interview process. Molly served as a teacher of the visually impaired at NSSEO for several years and the past few years, also assuming a part time technical coordinator role for the Vision team. Molly has served as an active member of several NSSEO committees and is a natural leader, exuding compassion, insight and collaboration in her work. She will work closely with Melissa Swanson and district teams to serve students and support staff.

All three new leaders emulate the important combination of passion for students, experience and insights into the special focus of their respective roles. NSSEO is fortunate to have them as the newest members of the NSSEO Leadership team.

NSSEO Continuous Improvement Plan Final Board Report

A proud review of the collaborative efforts of staff, families, districts and leaders was shared in a presentation of the final report of the NSSEO Continuous Improvement Plan for 2017-2018. This report highlighted the many areas of growth and success in the domains of instructional practices, transition planning and the associated professional learning development of IEP best practices through training modules and revised implementation practices. Throughout the year, the Board has received updates aligned to the Continuous Improvement Plan, as well as associated focus areas that support the advancement of these goals. Those Board updates included expanded parent training and networking, the opening of the Parent Education Resource Center, the Tobler-PATHS Athletic Field, the NSSEO Legislative Roundtable, special education funding workshops and efforts at state level and other related systems work to provide greater structural and process supports to customize programs and services that address the individualized needs of students. This summer the NSSEO Leadership Team will establish updated goal

areas and evidence measures to focus on for the 2018-2019 school year and continue the important transitions and areas of priority for the upcoming year.



A Special Heartfelt Moment of Silence

In late May, NSSEO received the sad news that one of Kirk's early childhood students, Allyana Tripp passed away in her mother's arms. Ally, a District 59 student, graced the halls of Kirk School for two years with her adorable smile, stylish outfits and her zest for life. A moment of silence was provided at the June NSSEO Governing Board Meeting to reflect and remember Ally's incredible gift of personality and the mark she left on her

friends and staff at Kirk School.

This has been a year of growth, of systems work, of change, of progress, of good-byes and of loss. We have continued to focus on increasing and expanding partnerships, working as a collaborative educational community and have revised our mission/vision and values to best communicate why we exist, restate our purpose and ensure our values reflect the important beliefs we hold that convey what drives us to excel for the students we serve. We believe in creating and expanding opportunities, collaborative partnerships that supports greater growth and impact across our educational community and that we are committed to continuing our growth and efforts to further support truly exceptional students.