

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING
Newburyport High School, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950
Monday, November 6, 2023

Present: Sarah Hall, Juliet Walker, Bruce Menin, Brian Callahan, Steve Cole and Breanna Higgins. Mayor Sean Reardon arrived at 7:17PM

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice Chair Sarah Hall called the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:32 PM. Roll call found all members present except Mayor Sean Reardon. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

STUDENT & STAFF RECOGNITIONS:

Griffin Laplante, grade 12, was recognized for being an outstanding friendly & conscientious hard worker in the High School’s Main Office, as well as for assisting with the hand delivery of letters regarding the recent school safety training to all abutters of the high school.

High School Science teachers Erin Hobbs (Biology) & Catherine Taggart (Chemistry) were recognized for their leadership, hard work and dedication as the NEASC Accreditation Coordinators over the past 1 ½ years.

** short break **

CONSENT AGENDA:

Warrants:

Motion:

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: to approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following Warrant:

Warrant 813	\$444,817.80
A-Warrant	<u>\$ 10,455.58</u>
	\$455,273.38 Total

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Minutes:

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Steve Cole it was

VOTED: to accept the minutes of the October 2, 2023 School Committee Business meeting with a correction to page 4 (should read “to approve policy FA – Facilities Development Goals”).

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Minutes:

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to accept the minutes of the October 23, 2023 School Committee Business meeting as presented.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Student Report:

Newburyport high school student Theo Roberts provided the student report which included information on a variety of Veterans Day assemblies scheduled throughout the district, food and clothing drives, Bresnahan parent teacher conferences and the upcoming NHS fall play. (attached)

School Safety Training Highlights

- James Antonelli shared highlights of the school safety training and drills conducted at the high school on October 21st with the Newburyport Police and Fire departments and EMT services, as well as participants from Salisbury and Amesbury. Feedback from first responders participating in the drill was very positive. They hope to conduct similar trainings and drills in the future at the Molin/Nock and Bresnahan Schools.
- Mr. Antonelli's presentation also included a review of recent and/or proposed school safety updates to the high school as well as updates related to community / district communications.
- Superintendent Sean Gallagher will provide a brief summary of the Seabrook Power Plant safety protocols at the next meeting.

2023 iReady Presentation

- Assistant Superintendent LisaMarie Ippolito explained that students in grades K-8 take the iReady diagnostics three times per year (September, December and April). iReady was first implemented in the Fall of 2022 as part of the Strategic Plan to have a data collection tool.
- LisaMarie reviewed the iReady Data Report for the beginning of the 23-24 school year, which covered diagnostic data for both English and Math for children in grades K-8.

MASC Resolutions & MASC By-Law Amendment Proposal

- Juliet Walker explained the role of delegates attending the annual November meeting of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC).
- The Newburyport School Committee reviewed 8 Resolutions that were proposed by MASC member districts and moved forward by the MASC Resolutions Committee for consideration at the annual MASC meeting, as well as reviewed a proposal to amend the MASC by-laws.
- Resolution 7: The committee members decided to split this resolution into four sections, then review, discuss and vote on each separately (identified as 7A, 7B, 7C and 7D).

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Steve Cole it was

VOTED: to adopt Resolution 1 – Full Stable Funding for METCO.

Motion Passed

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to adopt Resolution 2 – Regarding Investigations and Recommendations For Transportation Bidding Procedures.

Motion Passed

Motion:

On a motion by Steve Cole and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: to approve Resolution 3 – Regional Transportation.

Motion Passed

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Mayor Reardon it was

VOTED: to approve Resolution 4 – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with the understanding that the language needs to be amended more broadly and we empower our delegate to make that decision.

Motion Passed

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Mayor Reardon it was

VOTED: to support Resolution 5 – MA School Building Authority.

Motion Passed

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Juliet Walker it was

VOTED: to adopt Resolution 6 – School Bus Stop Arm Surveillance Act and Enforcement and Penalties.

Motion Passed

Motion:

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: to pass Resolution 7 – Related to MCAS, with amendments.

Motion – Withdrew (for the purpose of splitting # 7 into four sections)

Breanna Higgins abstained

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Steve Cole it was

VOTED: to adopt Resolution 7A – Related to MCAS (to develop a wider, more consensus-built strategy for an evaluation system with meaningful input from legitimate stakeholders).

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins abstained

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to support Resolution 7B – Related to MCAS (to launch a comprehensive evaluation to investigate the extent of biases pertaining to MCAS testing and make these results public).

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins abstained

Motion:

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: **not to support** Resolution 7C – Related to MCAS (to enact a moratorium on MCAS testing effective immediately).

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins abstained

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Julie Walker it was

VOTED: to support Resolution 7D – Related to MCAS amended to read *that MASC urges Massachusetts to develop **alternatives** to the high-stakes MCAS tests.*

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins abstained

Motion:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Juliet Walker it was

VOTED: to support Resolution 8 – Safe Storage of Firearms.

Motion Passed

Motion:

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: to support the Proposal to Amend the MASC By-Laws (note: related to expiration of resolutions).

Motion Passed

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:

Finance Subcommittee:

- Brian Callahan stated FINCOM has not met.

Policy Subcommittee:

- Juliet Walker reviewed the summary of suggested revisions for policies presented for a first reading for policy manual Section I (Instruction).
- The next meeting will be held on November 13th.

Fundraising Advisory Committee

- The first meeting was recently held; and consisted of introductions and casual discussion to get to know each representative. The next meeting will be held on November 17th.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

- School-based Budget Workshops: Superintendent Gallagher stated the Bresnahan workshop was recently held on November 2nd and attended by several school committee members, staff and a parent. Two more school-based budget workshops will be held this month.
- Superintendent’s Advisory Council met on October 24th. Discussions revolved around MCAS data, as well as how to balance MCAS data with the Portrait of a Graduate vision.
- Budget Guidelines: The Superintendent described four budget guidelines and reported that his Administration has begun working on the FY25 budget.
- SBIRT Screening: (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment) will shift to students in grades 8 & 10 instead of students in grades 7 & 9. He explained that SBIRT screening is required by MA Law (M.G.L.c.71s.97). In addition, Newburyport has been selected to imbed a Youth Wellness Coach to administer the screening.
- Special Education Hiring Update: Focus groups related to the Director of Pupil Services hiring process will be held on November 15th. A survey for the entire school community will be open November 9-19th. The results of the focus groups & survey will then be used by NESDEC to create a candidate profile. A screening committee is being created and meetings will begin in early December. The position has been advertised.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Mayor Reardon shared information about Whittier Regional’s proposed building project. He explained that 11 participating districts would have to cover the expenses, and as Newburyport’s is the 2nd largest district, this could amount to 12%. A vote will take place on January 23, 2024. He will continue to work with other City leaders.
- Sarah Hall is unable to attend the SEPAC meeting; Breanna Higgins will register to attend.

Executive Session:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: that we move to Executive session for the purpose of discussing possible litigation and legal matters, and not to reconvene in Open Session. (9:15PM)

Motion Passed

Roll Call Vote

Mayor Reardon	yes
Sarah Hall	yes
Brian Callahan	yes
Juliet Walker	yes
Breanna Higgins	yes
Steve Cole	yes
Bruce Menin	yes

City of Newburyport

School Committee Business Meeting

Newburyport High School Library, November 6th, 2023

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Student Representative Report by Theo Roberts

Thank you Mrs. Hall, and good evening everyone. Here are some updates from the district over the past few weeks.

Bresnahan:

Bresnahan students held their annual costume parade on Tuesday, October 31st. I, along with the administration, would like to thank all of the parents and community members who attended to cheer on the students.

Tomorrow, the Bresnahan will host an assembly in observance of the Veterans' Day holiday. Invitations have been sent out to several Veterans in the Newburyport area who are family members of Bresnahan students. The students have made cards for the Veterans and will sing them a few songs.

As with the rest of the schools, the Bresnahan is hosting the first round of parent/teacher conferences this week. These conferences will go along with the iReady Math Classroom Family Night on Thursday, November 9th. This is an event open to all parents and guardians to learn about how their children are being taught math with the iReady system.

Molin:

The Molin School will also have a Veterans Day Ceremony this week. Preceding the assembly, students will take part in reading "The Poppy Lady", a yearly tradition. As a project to go along with this book, students will write down the names of any family Veterans on small red hearts and place them on the courtyard windows. The Veterans Day Assembly on Thursday will teach students about the holiday and what it means.

Also this month, the Molin School is focusing on Community Gratitude Month with several group projects and a school-wide Food & Toiletries Drive. Both grades are responsible for different items on the list, which will be brought to the Pettengill House at the end of the month.

Nock:

Nock students will also meet Veterans and local Active Duty Members. This is a tradition that goes back 8 years. During the assembly, students will be able to ask questions and the veterans will share their experiences with the students. This provides an opportunity for the eighth graders to have a better understanding of the meaning of this holiday.

Work will also continue on the Student-Led Conversation project. Nock students have been focusing on their Academic Data, Extracurricular Activities, and Personal Experiences to format their conversations.

High School:

Finally, we have some news from NHS. Members of the High School's Red Cross Club organized a Veteran's Day Ceremony for tomorrow's half day. The assembly will include words from local Veterans, recognition of staff members in the armed forces, and some sections from the school band. As a part of the school's greater recognition of the holiday, the Red Cross Club has also organized a collection drive for homeless veterans. I'd like to thank Maddie Jackman, Gwenyth Hoffman, AnnieKate Ames, and Ms. Colleen Fallon for coordinating this.

This past Thursday, high school students participated in various activities during their advisory blocks. In grade 9, the IGNITE peer mentors worked with their freshmen to help them reflect on goals they had created in mid-October. A part of their conversation also centered on identifying obstacles as well as strategies to overcome any obstacles. In grade 10, students completed a Career Interest Profiler within their Naviance school account. This activity helps students connect their interests and strengths to different career areas. And in grades 11 and 12, students had the opportunity to select a career speaker to learn more about an area in which they have an interest.

I would additionally like to recognize the following students who are designated "Clippers of the Month" by Principal Wulf. These students are accomplished in embracing learning and improvement within the classroom as well as participating in activities outside of school. This month's recipients are Colby Arel, Owen Cuddire, Natalie DeGraves, Skylar Ikemoto, Emery Lively, Huma Mirzayee, Maximilian Repczynski, Aidan Robinson and Jack Sherman.

Finally, we have some news from the Athletic and Theater departments. The High School's fall play entitled "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime" will have its opening night on November 16th. Additional showing times are the 17th and the 18th.

The 5 teams that played this past weekend--Football, Field Hockey, Volleyball, Boys AND Girls Soccer--all won their playoff games. Good luck to girls soccer at their match against Weston tonight! Tomorrow, Volleyball will travel to Wakefield for their next game. On Wednesday Field Hockey will host Dedham and Boys Soccer will travel to Gloucester. During the Friday holiday, the football team will take on Foxboro and on Saturday, Girls and Boys Cross Country will compete in the Division 2 Championships in Wrentham. I wish everyone the best of luck.

That is all from me this evening, I'll now turn things back over to Mrs. Hall. Thank you.

Additional Meeting Notes:

- ❖ School Safety Training

