

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING
Senior/Community Center, 331 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

Monday, January 6, 2025
Organizational Meeting

Present: Mayor Sean Reardon, Sarah Hall, Juliet Walker, Kathleen Shaw, Brian Callahan, and Breanna Higgins; (Andy Boger arrived late)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Mayor Sean Reardon called the School Committee Organizational meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:30 PM. Roll call found all members present except Andy Boger (arrived 6:32PM). All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

VIVA-VOCE VOTE FOR 2025 VICE-CHAIR

Mayor Reardon called for nominations for the 2025 Vice-Chair. Sarah Hall nominated Juliet Walker as the 2025 Vice-Chair.

Motion:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Brian Callahan it was
VOTED: to elect Juliet Walker as the 2025 Vice-Chair.

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Reardon	Yes
Sarah Hall	Yes
Andrew Boger	Yes
Brian Callahan	Yes
Breanna Higgins	Yes
Kathleen Shaw	Yes
Juliet Walker	Yes

Motion Passed Unanimously

Juliet Walker was elected as the 2025 Vice-Chair.

School Committee Acknowledgement - Policies BCA & BCC-BCD

Members signed the acknowledgement form indicating they have received and reviewed both the School Committee Member Ethics Policy (BCD) and School Committee Operating Principles & Norms of Interaction Policy (BCC-BCD).

2025 Subcommittee Assignments

Mayor Reardon read the assignments for the 2025 Subcommittees.

Finance

Brian Callahan - Chair
Juliet Walker
Andy Boger

Minutes

Motion:

On a motion by Mayor Reardon and seconded by Sarah Hall it was

VOTED: to accept the minutes of the December 18, 2024 School Committee Business meeting with one correction (page 3 – retreat time is 10AM – 2PM).

Motion Passed

Student Representative Report

Maddie Jackman presented the student report that included Clipper Courses at the Bresnahan, Career Exploration Speaker Series at the Nock, and NHS musicians performing at a concert in Lexington.

FY26 Preliminary Expense Projections

Superintendent Gallagher discussed areas that typically drive budget increases each year. The state's budget schedule was reviewed, as well as district enrollments from 2018 thru 2025. Budget increases are anticipated in the following 6 areas: contractual increases, COLA, non-personal, special education, transportation and utilities/maintenance.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Finance Subcommittee

Brian Callahan reported the committee will meet on January 16th at a time to be determined.

Policy Subcommittee

Juliet Walker reported they did not meet last month. She will cancel the January 13th meeting and reconvene in February.

Communications Subcommittee

Andy Boger stated they didn't hold a meeting in December. The next meeting will be January 23rd.

Superintendent's Report

Business Manager Update: Superintendent Sean Gallagher stated three applicants have been received, and the district will continue to advertise the position on School Spring and MASBO.

Athletic Director Search Update: The screening committee met last week and have selected eight candidates to interview. Three candidates will be moved forward to participate in the community forum on January 16.

District's Music Program: Many more students are participating in music/drama programs throughout the district. The Superintendent explained various changes that were made. Staff now work together across the district rather than just school-based. Band, chorus and orchestra is now available to Molin students during the school day. Schedules were restructured at the Nock, and now more courses are being offered to grades 6-7-8. The NHS/Nock bands have coordinated in-school rehearsal times.

Follow-up

SEPAC: Kathleen Shaw said they plan to have three or four more meetings. The recent joint meeting with Amesbury was very good. No specific date has been set yet for the next meeting.

NEF Update: Brian Callahan reported they haven't met since November, and believes the next meeting is January 22.

Hybrid Meetings: Brian Callahan has the new equipment. Juliet Walker can help run a test with Superintendent Gallagher before the next meeting.

New Business

- Mayor Sean Reardon stated the State of the City will be held at 7PM on February 26th.
- Today the Mayor launched the 3rd annual Public & Community Service Awards. In addition, he announced a new award in honor of Reverend Helen Murgida.
- Mayor Sean Reardon attended a teacher contract negotiations meeting at Whittier today. In the past, Tracy Blais, Newbury Town Manager, has represented the 11 communities. It is currently undecided who will be the representative in the upcoming negotiations. The next meeting is Monday (January 13th).
- Juliet Walker reminded all members the SC Retreat will be 10AM-2PM, Saturday, 1/11/25. Kathleen Shaw asked members to stay afterwards to talk about the Talent Show.
- Andy Boger suggested an update at the next meeting regarding Cell Phone Use.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

On a motion by Mayor Reardon and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 7:15PM.

Motion Passed

Government Report: Multiple Studies Show Fluoridation Can Lower Child IQ

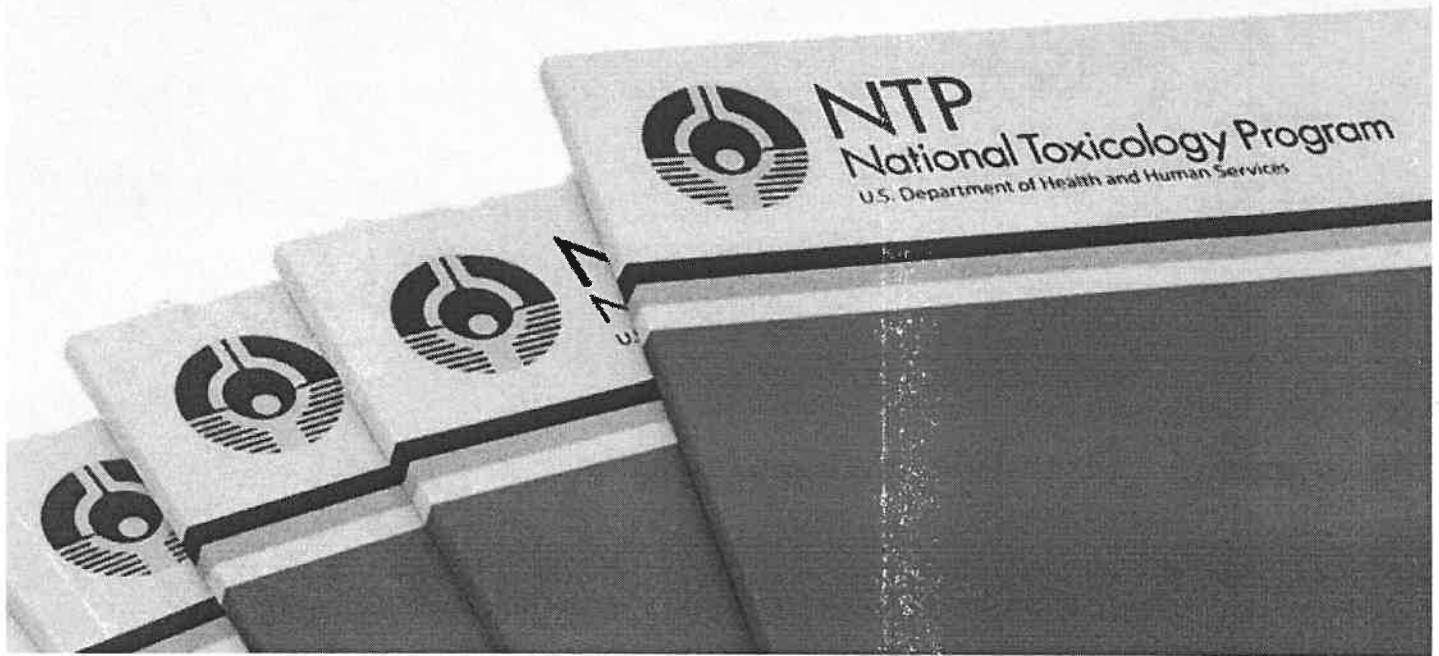
Fluoride Action Network <mail@networkforgood.com>
Reply-To: info@fluoridealert.org
To:

Mon, Jan 6, 2025 at 2:34 PM



Fluoride Action Network
fluoridealert.org

**Government Report:
Multiple Studies Show Fluoridation Can Lower Child IQ**



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Today, National Toxicology Program (NTP) authors published an article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Pediatrics* with details underpinning an NTP report released in August 2024 that concluded fluoride is neurotoxic and can lower the IQ of children. Today's article goes further, showing IQ losses can occur even at exposure levels experienced by some people with artificially fluoridated water.

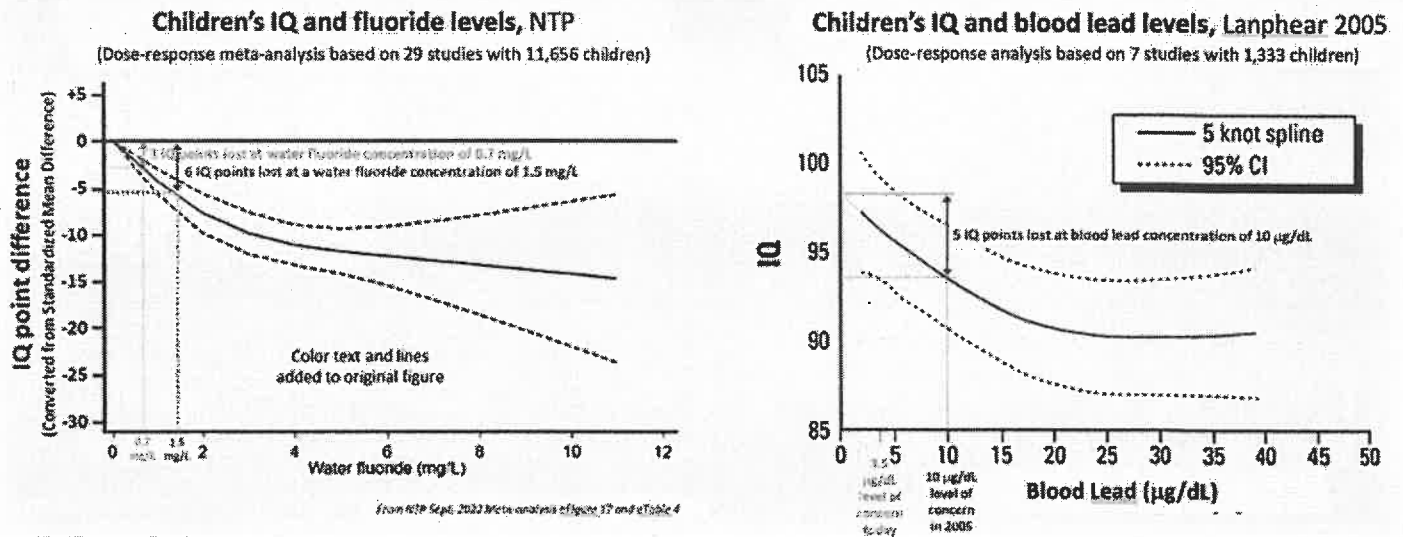
FAN's Executive Director Stuart Cooper said, "The authors combined information from multiple studies to get a more reliable view of the total evidence that isn't skewed by just one or two outlier studies. This approach is called meta-analysis. Out of 59 studies, 52 linked higher fluoride levels with lower IQ. The average loss was 7 points. Reduced IQ was also found in meta-analyses that combined seven high-quality studies having exposures below 1.5 milligrams fluoride per liter of water (mg/L), the range directly relevant to fluoridated areas. The authors emphasized the finding's 'consistency' and 'robustness.' This report gives ammunition to the scores of cities around the country now considering stopping fluoridation."

Chris Neurath, FAN's Science Director, emphasized, "The report also found a clear trend between studies, with IQ losses increasing as study fluoride levels increased. This dose-response relationship strengthens the NTP's conclusion that the effect is real and not an artifact of confounding factors or chance." Neurath described what he considers another key finding that "deals a blow to claims by fluoridation defenders that loss of IQ has only been found in studies with exposures twice as high as in the US. Artificial fluoridation in the US has a target concentration of 0.7 mg/L. The report's dose-response analyses had studies with concentrations as low as 0.3 mg/L finding loss of IQ. Seven studies had concentrations below 1.5 mg/L and an average IQ loss of about 3 points.

The authors warned that:

"Although the estimated decreases in IQ ... may seem small ... research on other neurotoxicants has shown that subtle shifts in IQ at the population level can affect people who fall within the high and low ranges of the population's IQ distribution. For context, a 5-point decrease in a population's IQ would nearly double the number of people classified as intellectually disabled."

Editors of *JAMA Pediatrics*, responding to a previous study published in their journal, noted that the effect of fluoride was "on par with lead." Neurath confirmed the *JAMA* editors' comments, explaining, "The similarities between effects of fluoride and lead on children's IQ can be seen by comparing the two neurotoxicant's dose-response graphs. The NTP produced a graph from its meta-analysis of multiple studies, which is compared to a graph of child blood lead and IQ from a pooled analysis paper that persuaded the CDC and EPA to lower the acceptable level of lead in children":



On the left is the NTP's graph of IQ loss by water fluoride concentration. At 0.7 mg/L, the estimated average IQ loss is 3 points. According to Neurath, "3 IQ points is the average. Many children may experience no loss, while others will lose more than 3 points." To detect this effect required careful studies with many children. Observing the effect in the US is even harder because 2/3rds of the country is fluoridated so fluoride ends up in bottled beverages and many processed foods, making it difficult to find comparison groups with low exposure. That's why NTP combined multiple studies to get a clearer picture of what was happening at exposure levels common in the US. The dose-response curve shows statistically significant IQ losses down to the lowest fluoride levels.

An editorial by dentist and fluoridation advocate Steven Levy accompanied the article. He questions the NTP's meta-analysis despite it having had six peer-reviews in the last five years with no substantive changes. Levy relies heavily on a meta-analysis by Kumar, another dentist fluoridation advocate. Kumar claimed his meta-analysis found no effect among studies below 1.5 mg/L. However, from emails obtained through Public Records requests, FAN has identified serious concerns that Kumar buried findings of a strong dose-response relationship below 1.5 mg/L because they contradicted his desired result.

The lead attorney in a recent [federal court case](#), Michael Connett, said “The NTP’s meta-analysis was a major reason the court concluded that fluoridation at 0.7 mg/L posed an ‘unreasonable risk’ of IQ loss in children. The defendant, EPA, tried to argue there was not enough certainty of harm at levels below 1.5 mg/L, but the court concluded there was more than enough, [ruling](#).”

“In all, there is substantial and scientifically credible evidence establishing that fluoride poses a risk to human health; it is associated with a reduction in the IQ of children and is hazardous at dosages that are far too close to fluoride levels in the drinking water of the United States Reduced IQ poses serious harm. Studies have linked IQ decrements of even one or two points to, e.g., reduced educational attainment, employment status, productivity, and earned wages.”

Connett added, “The court also noted that because humans vary in susceptibility to toxic agents – with some harmed at doses 10x lower than the average person – studies finding IQ loss at 1.5 mg/L provide sufficient evidence to conclude that even 0.15 mg/L poses an unreasonable risk of harm to the most susceptible.”

FAN’s founder and current senior advisor, Paul Connett PhD said “The second shoe of NTP’s review has just dropped and should end fluoridation once and for all. The dental groups clinging to fluoridation should read this report instead of repeating their mantra that ‘fluoridation is safe and effective’. No fluoridation promoter can still claim that the best science and scientific analysis shows that fluoridation is safe. Far from it. It is too risky to expose our babies and formula-fed infants to fluoride. There are much better ways to get fluoride’s benefit against tooth decay, like fluoridated toothpaste, that don’t require swallowing it. The latest Cochrane Collaboration [review](#) of fluoridation’s effectiveness [found](#) that water fluoridation no longer provides more than a marginal reduction in cavities.”

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Submitted by: Madeleine Jackman

Location: Senior Center

Bresnahan News:

We are about to begin our second session of Clipper Courses and are excited to offer origami, green team, art, mindfulness, typing and more!

Staff are looking forward to the professional development day. After the district sessions on Portrait of a Graduate, Bresnahan staff Stacey Boucher, Haley Budden, Jill Mailloux and Julie Doyle will provide professional development on blended learning and how it can be utilized in the elementary setting.

Molin News: Nothing Submitted

Nock News:

The Nock 8th grade team will be kicking off the January Career Exploration Speaker Series on Thursday. This initiative is a key component of our School Improvement Plan and aligns with the strategic goals around our Portrait of a Graduate.

The speaker series offers students a unique opportunity to meet professionals from a wide range of fields. They will learn not only about various careers but also about the personal journeys that these professionals have taken to reach their current roles. Our speakers will also provide valuable advice to our students as they consider their future educational paths and careers, particularly as they prepare to transition into high school. This series is a wonderful way to enhance our "exploration" efforts during the middle school years.

Our lineup of speakers includes business owners, an Army Captain who is an architect, individuals working in the arts, finance, marketing, medical fields, software development, and much more. The diversity of careers being represented will certainly help broaden our students' perspectives and inspire them as they start to think about their future aspirations.

In addition to the speaker series, we are also finalizing plans for Year 3 of our college tour initiative. We are tentatively scheduled to visit several colleges at the end of March, with more details to follow soon.

High School News:

This Saturday the following NHS musicians will join hundreds of the best student musicians from our corner of Massachusetts in the Northeastern senior district band, orchestra, jazz band, and chorus, at a concert in Lexington: Cedar Schumacher, Josh Burrell, Evan Lagueux, Max Piotrowski, and Sam Parr. These students represent the best of the Newburyport music program, and the school district as a whole. Congratulations to them from all of us, their parents, the NHS administration, and their music teachers.