

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**  
**Newburyport High School, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950**

**Wednesday, December 18, 2024**

**Present:** Mayor Sean Reardon, Sarah Hall, Juliet Walker, Brian Callahan, Kathleen Shaw, and Breanna Higgins  
**Absent:** Andy Boger

**CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Sean Reardon called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:32 PM. Roll call found all members present, except Andy Boger. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. At this point in the meeting, Sarah Hall took over.

**Public Comments:** none

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Warrants:** none

**Minutes**

**Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to accept the minutes of the November 15, 2024 Special School Committee Business meeting as presented.

**Motion Passed**  
**Andy Boger absent**

**Motion:**

On a motion by Mayor Reardon and seconded by Kathleen Shaw it was

**VOTED:** to accept the minutes of the December 2, 2024 School Committee Business meeting as presented.

**Motion Passed**  
**Andy Boger absent**

**Student Representative Report:**

Theo Roberts presented the student report that included the MA Audubon classroom program at the Bresnahan, "Holidays Around the World" doors at the Molin, a Career Speaker Series update at the Nock, and the Mock Trial Team preparations at the high school.

**Education Commonwealth Project Presentation**

Superintendent Sean Gallagher introduced Peter Piazza, Director of School Quality Measures, and Julie Spencer-Robinson, Ph.D., Head of Strategy and Operations from the Education Commonwealth

Project. Their presentation included the company's mission, background, funding sources, partners and ECP / MCIEA membership information. They spoke of the School Quality Measures framework and data dashboard, and shared strategies and tools they are using with schools throughout the state. The presentation was followed by a Q&A session.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **Finance Subcommittee**

Brian Callahan reported the committee met last week (December 12<sup>th</sup>) and discussed transfers, budgets, budget hearings, and local area athletic fees.

### **Policy Subcommittee**

Juliet Walker reported they did not meet this month.

### **Communications Subcommittee**

Sarah Hall reported they did not meet.

### **Integrated Arts Project Media Lab Approval**

Superintendent Sean Gallagher explained that the NEF (Newburyport Education Foundation) is funding the renovation of the Integrated Arts Media Lab project at the high school. The renovation is changing the space from a classroom into a media lab, therefore formal approval from the school committee is needed.

### **Motion:**

On a motion by Breanna Higgins and seconded by Juliet Walker it was

**VOTED:** to support the Integrated Arts Media Lab project as presented to the School Committee as of this date, and to accept donations for the project, in accordance with Policy KCD – Public Gifts of the Schools.

**Motion Passed**  
**Andy Boger absent**

### **Superintendent's Report**

**Integrated Arts Project Media Lab Update:** Superintendent Sean Gallagher reviewed the current project timeline for final design plans, on-site walk through with architect, furniture plans, bidding dates and demolition/construction plans.

**NHS Water Heater Update:** The Superintendent will be going to the City Council and their Budget & Finance Committee for funding. He explained that in order to pay the vendor for the work completed, funds from three school Building/Maintenance accounts has been used.

**Fundraising Update:** Superintendent Gallagher presented the new permission form, financial report form, and fundraising calendar which have been added to the district website.

### **Follow-up**

**School Committee Retreat Planning Update:** Sarah Hall stated the School Committee winter retreat has been scheduled for Saturday, January 11 from 10:00 – 2:00PM in the Nock library. She will be meeting with Mayor Reardon and Juliet Walker to finalize the agenda.

### **New Business**

- Kathleen Shaw stated that SEPAC held a virtual meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup> with Amesbury and the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.
- Kathleen Shaw gave a “shout out” to Paul White and Lisa Furlong for their involvement with the recent Think Kids training sessions.
- Mayor Reardon sent a draft list of Subcommittee assignments for 2025, and asked members to review the list and contact him with any concerns.
- Breanna Higgins suggested that competency determination be discussed at the upcoming School Committee Retreat.
- Sarah Hall stated that City Council recently voted to change their 2025 meeting schedule to every third Monday, which will conflict with the school committee meeting schedule.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

#### **Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

**VOTED:** to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 7:56PM.

**Motion Passed**

**Andy Boger absent**

Submitted by: - Theo Roberts

Location: High School Library

### **Bresnahan News:**

Bresnahan students participated in the Hour of Code last week. This is a world-wide play based movement that gets students engaged in coding, collaboration, critical thinking and communicating. Thank you to our STEM teacher Kristin Spinney and our Technology Integrator, Stacey Boucher, for making it happen! Our third graders participated in a special classroom program hosted by Mass Audubon. Students enjoyed learning about the behavior and adaptations of our local owls and even had the chance to dissect and owl pellet. We would like to thank the PTO for funding this engaging and interesting learning opportunity. Lastly, this week we will host a musical assembly with our favorite NHS performing artists! We are thrilled to host our annual sing-a-long with them. It is a wonderful opportunity to get our youngest and oldest students together to celebrate and embody the NPS Portrait of a Graduate mission.

### **Molin News:**

Molin's holiday magic is in full swing with our "Holidays Around the World Doors" display! Our creative students and dedicated teachers are transforming classroom doors into captivating showcases of global celebrations. From the celebration of light on St. Lucia Day to the cozy warmth of Yalda, the merry traditions of Christmas in Brazil, and the vibrant spirit of Kwanzaa, each door tells a unique tale of cultural richness. The Molin's wonderfully adorned doors embody the spirit of togetherness and cultural understanding.

Molin 4th and 5th graders spread holiday cheer by caroling at local nursing homes.

**Nock News:** I would like to highlight the enriching experience our 6th grade students had attending a performance of *A Christmas Carol*. Following the performance, our teachers have been conducting engaging preview and follow-up lessons that not only enhance the students' understanding of the classic text but also align with our academic standards. This opportunity has helped to deepen the students' appreciation for literature while reinforcing critical thinking and analysis skills.

Additionally, I'm excited to share that our 8th grade students will be participating in the upcoming Career Speaker Series, which will launch after the holiday break. This initiative aims to expose our students to a variety of professions and provide valuable insights into potential career paths. We look forward to fostering the students' interest and helping them make connections between their education and future opportunities which aligns with our Portrait of A Graduate Competency - Prepared for Life after graduation.

### **High School News:**

The Global Citizenship Program has been busy with Sophomores working towards completion of a UNESCO online course that develops their understanding of themselves as global citizens. Upon completion this month they will receive a certificate from the course. In addition, we had a great workshop during the NHS Showcase night with Greg Coles' Dance and Drums Company as our guest artist where we explored the African Diaspora through the African drum. Superintendent Gallagher and Principal Wulf along with 8th grade parents and students joined in throughout the evening. A grant from the NEF supported this participatory workshop.

The mock trial team is preparing for their first round of trials. They have been studying their assigned case and working on their argument and questioning. Thank you to advisor Melissa Martin and Attorney Damian Turco for supporting the team as they get ready for their competitions.

Congratulations are in order for our Investment Club. Not only do they manage a portfolio using funding provided through the Newburyport Education Foundation, they also participate in the Massachusetts Stock Market Game. In this simulation, participating schools receive an amount of money and develop and manage a portfolio over a 4 month period. This year our team placed 3rd overall in the competition. Our investment club continues to be a top tier group against other teams in the state. Way to go, Clippers!

On behalf of the teachers and students of Newburyport high School, I would like to thank Alliance of Climate and Environmental Stewards for all of the work they did to organize yesterday's Environmental House. This was a great opportunity for our students to learn about the future of jobs in the environmental sector as well as network with those in the field. Special thanks to presenters: Mark Ritchey, Frank Arena, Maddie Rhoden, Erin. Hobbs, and Mayor Sean Reardon for taking time to speak to our students.