

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

Monday, June 2, 2025

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

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Juliet Walker called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:30 PM. Roll call found all members present except Mayor Sean Reardon (arrived 7:29PM). All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Executive Session:

Motion:

On a motion at 6:32PM by Brian Callahan and seconded by Andrew Boger it was

VOTED: to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy as it relates to non-contract related business, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee.

Motion Passed

Roll Call Vote

| School Committee Member | Vote |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Mayor Sean Reardon | absent |
| Juliet Walker | Yes |
| Andrew Boger | Yes |
| Brian Callahan | Yes |
| Breanna Higgins | Yes |
| Kathleen Shaw | Yes |
| Sarah Hall | Yes |

School Committee returned to regular business meeting – call to order at 7:03PM.

Public Comments - none

Warrant

Motion:

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

VOTED: to approve the Warrant in the amount of \$415,303.41 as presented.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Minutes

Motion:

On a motion by Breanna Higgins and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to adopt the minutes for the May 5th and May 19th School Committee meetings.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Student Representative Report

Maddie Jackman presented the student report which included Mindful May and the school-wide Gratitude Garland at the Bresnahan, STEAM and STEM expo's at the Molin, literature circles and overnight field trips at the Nock, and Seal of Biliteracy awards, the German student visit, and graduation at the High school.

Cell Phones – NHS Community Dialogue

Lynne Cote (Library Media Specialist), Eric Schildge (Nock ELA Teacher), and students Tommy Rich and Caroline Jones presented feedback regarding the Cell Phone Community Dialogue held at the high school on May 13, 2025. They explained the purpose of a community dialogue and the reason for having one, along with the preparation and timeline, their approach, dialogue questions used, who attended, and what they learned from the interview process. They also shared their findings collected from the exit tickets. Principal Andy Wulf reviewed recommended adjustments to the high school's cell phone policy.

Agenda Change

Motion:

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

VOTED: to move item #8 in the meeting agenda to be heard before item #7 (Special Education Programming Overview).

Motion Passed

Superintendent's Contract

Vice Chair Juliet Walker explained proposed modifications to Superintendent Gallagher's contract, specifically an increased salary due to a market adjustment that accurately reflects comparables in the CAL region, incorporate the current annuity and travel expenses into the total salary, and extend the duration of the contract by one year (ending June 30, 2028).

Motion:

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Breanna Higgins it was

VOTED: to increase Superintendent Sean Gallagher's annual salary to \$225,815 and extend his contract by one year (ending June 30, 2028).

Motion Passed

Special Education Programming Overview

Director of Student Support Services Brad Brooks and Program Directors Jeanna Guardino and Elise Comeau provided a presentation about Student Services. Mr. Brooks reviewed department staffing and explained the benefits of the new organizational structure. He also reviewed the departments role, program goals, various specialized district programs and the Transitional Services Post Grad program. Programming needs were discussed, including the new TIDES program that the district will pilot this summer. The presentation ended with highlights of the past year.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Finance Subcommittee

Brian Callahan stated FINCOM will hold a combined meeting with the Communications Subcommittee on June 3rd. The next FINCOM meeting will be held on June 18th at 8:00AM.

Policy Subcommittee

Kathleen Shaw stated they will meet next on June 9th at 7:00PM.

Communications Subcommittee

Sarah Hall stated the May 29th meeting has been cancelled due to the joint meeting with FINCOM on June 3rd at 6PM in Central office.

Teaching & Learning Subcommittee

Breanna Higgins stated that School Improvement Plans will be reviewed at their next meeting on June 4th at 6:30PM in the Nock library.

Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee

Mayor Sean Reardon will be sending a self-evaluation to Superintendent Gallagher, and by June 16th he plans to send the School Committee members a form to be filled out.

Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent spoke about several annual senior traditions that he was able to attend: Senior Class Clap-out, Scholarship Night and the Promenade. He also attended the STEM Showcase for grades 1 – 3 held at the Bresnahan. The final Superintendent Advisory Council meeting of the year included a discussion on the budget presentation and possible agenda topics for next year.

New Business

- Brian Callahan shared names of award winners for the Senior Car Parade.
- The PTO is sponsoring the Spring Fling at the Bresnahan on Friday, June 6th.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

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

VOTED: to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 8:37PM.

Motion Passed

Submitted by: Maddie Jackman

Location: Senior Center

Bresnahan News

Gratitude Garland

The Bresnahan focused on *Mindful May* this month. The students are so excited that we're bringing back our school wide Gratitude Garland as a way to practice mindfulness all month long. Students are taking time to think about things they are grateful for, and writing or drawing pictures of those things on strips of colored paper that are then being connected into a garland. We're hopeful that we have enough grateful thoughts to wrap around our entire school building during a whole school celebration on June 5th!

STEAM Expo

Last week the Bresnahan hosted their annual STEAM Expo! Sixteen exhibitors volunteered their time and expertise to make this event possible. This year was especially meaningful due to the large participation from both students and faculty.

The event provided a wide variety of hands-on learning experiences. Students had the opportunity to create music with fruit, produce stop-motion films, witness colorful fire demonstrations from AP Chemistry students, construct binary code bracelets, explore water properties, program robots, and so much more. The enthusiasm and energy throughout the gym was inspiring, reflecting the success of this collaborative effort in enriching STEM education for our students.

Thank you to all staff, parents, and volunteers who contributed to making this event such a meaningful day. A heartfelt thank you to our Newburyport PTO for funding and sponsoring this event. Another sincere thank you to Mayor Reardon and Superintendent Gallagher for attending the event to show support. And an enormous THANK YOU to Bresnahan Stem Teacher, Kristin Spinny for planning it all!

Molin News

The Molin had a wonderful visit with Jarrett J. Krosoczka, author of the *Lunch Lady* series and many other books. During the presentation, he shared his journey to becoming an author, explained his writing process, and talked about the sources of his inspiration. He also led guided illustration sessions with each grade level, teaching students how to draw characters from his stories.

“One Dollar, One Meal, One HUGE Difference!” – Fundraiser Success!

We are incredibly proud to share that our amazing 4th and 5th grade students at Molin School raised an outstanding \$15,000 in just two weeks during our recent Dollar Drive and Condiment Collection to support *Our Neighbor's Table*! Thanks to their dedication, enthusiasm, and compassion, our students helped provide 15,000 meals for individuals and families experiencing food insecurity in our community. Each dollar truly made a difference, and the impact of their efforts will be felt far beyond our school walls.

We are so grateful to our families, friends, neighbors, and everyone who supported this important cause—whether through dollars, condiments, or online donations. Your generosity and community spirit helped turn this fundraiser into an incredible success.

Molin students have shown what it means to care, take action, and make a meaningful difference—one dollar at a time.

Nock News

6th Grade

Students have been hard at work on literature circles, engaging in thoughtful discussions and deepening their reading comprehension skills. In social studies, they are channeling their creativity and knowledge by designing their own civilizations as part of their ancient civilizations project.

7th Grade

Excitement is building as the 7th grade prepares to head out to Camp Jewell! It promises to be a memorable trip filled with learning, adventure, and team-building experiences.

8th Grade

The 8th grade recently returned from their trip to Philadelphia. The visit was a great success—students had a meaningful, educational, and fun experience exploring the city's rich history. We are now preparing for the 8th Grade Class Day, which will take place on June 18th.

High School News

The Newburyport bands, orchestras, and choirs from grades 7-12 will be competing at the music in our parks festival, this Friday in Holyoke, MA. After the competition they will enjoy a day at Six Flags New England, where they will receive awards at the end of the day. The Nock ensembles have been attending this competition for several years, with the NHS ensembles joining last year, in what has become a new tradition of competitive performance for Newburyport music.

14 seniors in the class of 2025 received the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy in English & Spanish and 2 two received the award for English, Portuguese and Spanish - Congratulations!

German students visited the Goethe Institute in Boston on Wednesday, May 28th. The director and two interns from Germany welcomed the group and gave students an overview of the cultural institute.

The main focus of the visit was to learn about the elements present in the German fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm and compare and contrast them with American fairy tales.

**And last but not least,
Congratulations to the Class of 2025 on
their graduation yesterday.**