

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**  
**Newburyport High School, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950**  
**Monday, September 18, 2023**

**Present:** Mayor Sean Reardon, Sarah Hall, Juliet Walker, Bruce Menin, Brian Callahan, Steve Cole and Breanna Higgins

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

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** none

**STUDENT RECOGNITION:**

Nolan Smith is the 2023-2024 recipient of the Certificate of Academic Excellence award, which is designed by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendent's (MASS) to award academic excellence. This award is to be given each year to a high school senior who has distinguished themselves in the pursuit of excellence during their high school career.

**STAFF RECOGNITION:**

Aileen Maconi, NHS Art Teacher, was recognized for her drive and persistence in developing a Global Citizenship Program and Certificate Pathway for the High School.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Warrants:**

**Motion:**

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

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

Warrant 8097	\$504,206.20
Warrant 8098	\$ 17,817.05
A-Warrant	<u>\$ 8,941.14</u>
	\$530,964.39 Total

**Motion Passed**

**Minutes:**

**Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to adopt the minutes of the September 5, 2023 School Committee Business meeting, with noted changes (to modify the Public Comments Section to include the text on the new Public Comment Sign-in form.)

**Motion Passed**

### **Student Report:**

Newburyport high school students Elizabeth Homer and Theo Roberts were introduced as the new student representatives. Their report included news from the Nock and High School, as well as upcoming events, developing a portfolio system at NHS, and special student shout outs. (attached)

### **SIX HIGH SCHOOL OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS 2024 & 2025**

- Andy Wulf described the Global Citizenship program, as well as six proposed overnight field trips. Two high school students shared their experiences on the recent overnight trip to a leadership summit in Germany.
- Trips: Annual New York City Trip (April 2024), England/Scotland (February 2025), Central Europe/Holocaust (April 2025), Marine Conservation/Dominican Republic (February 2025), Artists of France/Spain (April 2025), and Cuisine & Culture in Northern Italy (Summer 2025).
- Breanna Higgins suggested a review of past fundraising to see if these efforts are reaching the high needs and/or low income students. Also review past trip enrollment data to learn if there are any trends with who is or is not taking advantage of these trips. Juliet Walker would like this participation information reported back to the School Committee.
- Juliet Walker would like to know how outreach is done for overnight trips. She would also like to obtain confirmation that all students on these trips are given a reprieve if a practice or an activity is missed, including that a communication about this goes out to all the staff (teachers, coaches etc).

### **Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to approve all the trips included in the packet as proposed, referencing Policy JJH - Student Overnight or Late Night Travel.

### **Motion Passed**

### **2022-2023 iREADY INTERNAL ASSESSMENT DATA DISCUSSION:**

- A brief video was shown that summarizes what iReady software does and how it works.
- Diagnostic report data for 2022-2023 literacy (grades 4-8) and math (grades K-8) was reviewed by Superintendent Sean Gallagher and Assistant Superintendent LisaMarie Ippolito. The presentation included a summary of reporting, training for staff and parents, 2023-2024 goals and student supports.
- IREADY Math presentation will be held for K-5 families on Tuesday, October 24 from 6-7PM in the Bresnahan library.
- IREADY Math training workshops for staff will be held on 9/15, 12/8, 2/9 and 5/10.
- LisaMarie Ippolito will speak with Nick Markos regarding possible criteria needed for taking 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra 1.
- Breanna Higgins would like to learn more about who is meeting goals, who is getting interventions, are they being challenged, and how the new curriculum is going to be assessed.

## **SCHOOL COMMITTEE SMART GOALS 2023-2024 - 2<sup>ND</sup> READ**

- The School Committee SMART Goals for 2023-2024 were reviewed.
- The approved list will be added to the School Committee page of the district website.

### **Motion:**

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

**VOTED:** to approve the School Committee SMART Goals for 2023-2024.

### **Motion Passed**

## **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:**

### **Finance Subcommittee:**

- Brian Callahan stated the committee met on September 14<sup>th</sup>, and fundraising, negative balances and a meeting schedule were discussed. In addition, the Policy and Finance subcommittees need to review the fundraising related policies, as well as a policy for transfers.
  - ❖ Mayor Sean Reardon suggested forming an adhoc group to gather a comprehensive list of everything happening with fundraising. This topic was tabled until the next meeting. Brian Callahan will take the lead.
- The Crossing Guards situation was also discussed, including using police, painting crosswalks a new color, and adding lights to all crossings.

### **Policy Subcommittee:**

- Juliet Walker reviewed the summary of policy revisions that were presented for a first reading for policy manual Sections D through H (details in the packet). The policy changes will move forward as written as a second reading at the next meeting, with the following exceptions:
  - *EC – Buildings & Grounds Management:* hold off with any changes per Mayor Reardon.
  - *EEAG – Student Transportation:* needs clarification
  - *EFD – Meal Charge Policy:* will clarify the “refund” instructions on page 2.
  - *FF – Naming New Facilities:* Hold off on any changes to this policy until receiving feedback from the legal team. Juliet Walker asked all SC members to think about the section in yellow.
  - *GBEB – Staff Conduct:* It is okay to remove the sentences marked in yellow and insert the text in the District’s personnel handbook.
  - *GBEBD – Online Fundraising and Solicitations – Crowdfunding:* hold; FINCOM will review the policy.
- The Policy Subcommittee is currently reviewing Section “I”, followed by “J” and “K”. Dorothy Presser will be at the Policy meeting at the end of October.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

- Superintendent Gallagher reported the district will finish submitting items for the Tiered Focus Monitoring to the State by the end of next week. The State will review the information, and schedule a visit after January 2024. He thanked Deb O'Connor and the entire Special Education Team for their hard work pulling this together.
- A comprehensive search for a new Special Education Director will be done with the help of the New England School Development Council (NESDEC). Once a contract is signed, they will be invited to attend a future meeting to provide an overview of their services to the School Committee.
- The company running the district's website was bought out by another company. The transition should be completed during the next few weeks. Superintendent Gallagher thanked Lisa Furlong for all the work she has completed on the website.
- Two people have expressed interest in the opening for a Newburyport representative on the Whittier Regional School Committee. Candidates will be invited to address the School Committee at the next scheduled meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A CISL meeting date needs to be set. Juliet Walker would like to ensure a statement is written to clarify what CISL is all about.
- The MASC Conference will be November 8-10, 2023. There will be 8 resolutions to review at the November 6<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting.
- The October 16<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting conflicts with the City Council's meeting. The School Committee's meeting needs to be changed.
- The Superintendent reported that the NHS Theatre group is having trouble collecting \$6115 owed to them from Brown Paper Tickets.
- Superintendent Gallagher thanked NMHUB for their efforts setting up all the equipment for this evenings meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

### **Motion:**

On a motion by Steve Cole and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

**VOTED:** to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 8:50 PM.

**Motion Passed**

Submitted by: Lizzy Homer & Theo Roberts  
Location – High School

### **News from the Nock Middle School:**

We have had an amazing first week of school. The students have set into their routine, are meeting expectations and have dove right into the academic curriculum across all disciplines. Students in the 8th grade had their first of many speaker series and welcomed many great community role models and mentors in the classroom. We want to thank Mayor Reardon, Mr. Menin, Superintendent Gallagher, Officer McElroy and Andi Egmont for volunteering some time to our students. We ended last week with an all school assembly that celebrated what has been a great opening of schools. Students donned the crimson and gold and proudly represented Clipper Nation. The focal point of the assembly was belonging, leadership and to be a person of high character this school year in and out of the community. It was a great day for the Nock.

### **News from the High School:**

This Thursday, NHS will welcome 20 German students and two of their teachers from our partner school in the town of Waldkirch in the Black Forest. This exchange program between the two schools has been going strong now for over 25 years. After a forced hiatus due to Covid, we are excited to welcome these students back. Spencer Wolf has spoken several times to the accompanying teachers recently who have told me the group is really excited to spend some time in the Clipper City this fall and experience "the American way of life" for a couple of weeks.

What a great and inspiring day we had at NHS on Friday. The upperclassmen participated in programming facilitated by motivational speaker Ed Gerety. He focused students on the personal impact of a growth mindset and the value of setting goals. Additionally, he helped students recognize the value of extending gratitude to those who have supported them to this point in their lives. I'd like to thank Blake Parker, Logan Jones, and Angus Webster for their participation and modeling during the presentation.

For the freshmen, the IGNITE Peer Mentors ran sessions to further support their transition into high school and ensure all students feel connected and part of the school community. The engagement level of our grade 9 students was awesome, and we are excited to have them for the next 4 years as we work to continuously improve NHS.

We like to commend all our IGNITE Peer Mentors for the work they took on this week to prepare for this day. They are helping develop a culture grounded in student leadership, character, growth, and a sense of belonging. Their energy and enthusiasm has been contagious and I love the new motto they have brought to the forefront, CLIPPERS UP!

Also, thank you to Ms. Lynne Cote, Ms. Katherine Mailhiot, Ms. Jill Moran, Ms. Stephanie Phillips, Ms. Lori. Solazzo and Mr. John Trask for their work in this week's mentor training and programming.

### **Upcoming events at NHS:**

Student Council is hosting its annual Club Fair the week of September 26. Clubs will have tables in the cafeteria during each of the 3 lunches this week so students can learn about different activities they can get involved in. Some new clubs that have been recently added to our program include the Red Cross Club and the Game Club.

Back to school night will take place Thursday, September 21st.

NHS is hosting the Greater Essex County College & Career Fair in the NHS Gym on Wednesday, September 27th from 6pm-7:30pm.

### **Course Spotlight**

This past summer, members of the High School English department reimagined assessment, developing a portfolio system to showcase student formative and summative learning in areas of literacy: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language. Grade 9 and Grade 11 students will have the opportunity throughout the year to demonstrate skill development, identify strengths, and target areas of growth as they reflect on their learning against the Massachusetts Framework Standards, while also developing a comprehensive portfolio of work to carry with them through their educational journey as they encompass our Portrait of a Graduate.

### **Congratulations and Shout Outs**

Congratulations to Nadia Toth. She was recently invited to participate in [WGBH's Outspoken Saturday](#). As always, her poetry and readings convey great emotion and depth.

Henry Acton, a senior last year was selected as a Soccer Scholar All America and will be honored at a banquet in Anaheim California on Jan 14th. He is the first ever at NHS to receive this award.

This year NHS has adopted the theme of "Sweep the Ship," meaning to take care of our school and each other. I'd like to commend students who have recently been caught "sweeping our ship." The following students stayed after last week's football game on their own to clear the student section of the bleachers: Cooper Grant, Martin DeJesus, Henry Walker, Michael Dunphy,,Sean Gasbarro,,Evan Lagueux.

We would also like to commend Gweneth Hoffman who had been seen picking trash left on the driveway as she came into school in the morning.