

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING
Monday, October 5, 2020
Senior/Community Center

Meeting Convened at 6:34 PM

Mayor Donna Holaday / Bruce Menin Presided

Present: Sean Reardon, David Hochheiser, Mayor Donna Holaday, Bruce Menin,
Steve Cole, Brian Callahan, Sheila Spalding

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Donna Holaday called the Business Meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:34 PM. Roll Call found all members present. All those present stood for the pledge of allegiance to the Flag.

At this point Vice-Chairman **Bruce Menin** assumed chairmanship of the Business Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Josh Bromfeld: What validated instrument are we going to use to access students that might not be able to access the curriculum remotely, when they might perfectly be able to do this in school? How are we going to access the district and how they're educating the students in this hybrid environment? Finally, did you have any COVID or pulmonary experts or environmental medical professionals, medical doctors inform you on any of these things?

Deek Harper: I would like to make a basic plea for some stability in these schools in the upcoming months. In the spring the at-home learning went fairly well even though it was a bit of a disaster. The teaching staff took a lot of heat on that. Stability can't be underrated regarding the mental health of not being in school. We should avoid risky behavior by having them go back even more, putting more kids in those schools is not a stable environment. We need to go slow, cautiously.

Monica Scoter Struder: I'm here to talk about the metrics. I want to reiterate. We worked so hard to have the kids back in the classroom. I want to make sure our metrics actually are made in a way so we can keep them there and are in a way that actually can enable them to have even more access to in-person learning. Some of the metrics are not specific and are not clear.

Lynn Scow, 75 High St.: My understanding from prior discussions in this forum is that the position of the four schools are quite different in terms of being able to meet the state distancing guidelines, yet they're treated as a group in terms of moving on to that third step. I would like to see some more explanation of what metrics each of the schools can meet, and I would like to add that I'm disappointed that a lot of the metrics, a lot of the state guidance that Newburyport is waiting to be changed before going back in person, are things that could be met with additional budget requests. Like the fact that you're telling us that we don't have the money to get enough buses to get the kids to school, so we have to wait for the State to change this distancing guidelines in order to allow kids to return to school just sounds crazy. We need to consider much more robust building and busing and more teaching solutions for the district.

Simone Bui: We have two infections in our school community with a total of 28 students, staff needing quarantine - not to mention the non-student family or friends who were also exposed. And I know the 2nd child was reportedly not infected while in school, but the fact that the contact tracing led to another 13 students who interacted with them outside of the school with specific key health and safety barriers that Massachusetts as Baker begins. We're not asking for a risk-free learning environment, we're

asking for sustainable work. We tell ourselves if we get too hot and step back that's what your metrics say, but if it feels cool again we can step forward and then it feels too hot again.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Warrants:

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Sean Reardon** it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$697,792.37

Motion Passed Unanimously

Minutes:

On a motion by **Brian Callahan** and seconded by **Sheila Spalding** it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the School Committee Business Meeting minutes of Monday, September 8, 2020 as amended.

Motion Passed Unanimously

NPS LEARNING MODEL TRANSITION PLAN METRICS:

Superintendent Gallagher stated that Newburyport is very fortunate to have several health care professionals working with us on a day-to-day basis since July to help guide and plan for the reopening during this pandemic: Dr. Jessica Su, Mike Allard, Frank Giacalone and Cathy Riccio. These professionals deal with the pandemic and virus data every day. Their expertise, along with guidance from DESE, has been beneficial to us as they have been able to provide information and guidance to identify the health matrix for reopening and different learning models.

Dr. Jessica Su stated she has over 20 years experience studying multiple complex diseases, focusing on asthma, COPD and lung diseases for the past 15 years. She has over 100 publications in asthma, COPD and various aspects of pulmonary lung function and works very closely with pulmonary critical care doctors in that area. Presently she is working with two COVID based grants, looking at COVID severity and hospitalized patients, as well as issues that deal with both electronic medical records within the hospital, but also learner epidemiological studies throughout the local area with a focus in Massachusetts. Every day she is looking at both the epidemiological implications and the physiology aspect. Dr. Su is also the president of the International Metabolomic Society that specializes in looking at specific metabolic inflammatory cascades that are seen as one of the crucial aspects of people who respond more poorly in COVID's scenarios. Dr. Su has four children in NPS, one child in each of the schools, and certainly is sympathetic to both wanting our kids to be back in school as much as possible, but wanting to do so in a safe way for our community.

Mike Allard stated that he also has 4 children, all of whom have come up through the Newburyport health system and Newburyport education system - 1 at college, and three at the high school. He is a founding member and runs the Home Base Program, a partnership of Mass General Hospital and the Boston Red Sox. It's the largest and first of its kind private sector program in the country treating our veterans who are suffering from post traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. This national program treats our veterans and their families from across the region but also from all over the US. Mr. Allard is also an administrator at Mass General Hospital for over 21 years. In March Mike had the great distinction of being asked by Governor Baker and his administration to start up New England's largest COVID positive field hospital, known as Boston Hope, at the Boston Convention Center. Mike stated

this was a remarkable experience and not unlike in some ways like our educators are facing, in which you have a critical mission to do something on a deadline. They had 10 days to build the field hospital, employ about 1,000 new employees and get the hospital up and running, so that we could decant the hospitals from the greater Boston area who are either sub-acute or post-acute coming of the ICU floors and into the field hospital, and when we think about real time data and how that affects decision making, there's certainly a science and we need to pay attention to the science, but there's also looking at that data and trying to understand all the variables that are behind it . That's one of the things that we certainly experienced at Boston Hope and trying to understand where COVID positive patients were coming in both in terms of the emergency departments and then the criteria for which they were going to be exiting, and when they needed to come to the Boston Hope Hospital. I was deployed there for about 3 months and home in June. Coming into the educational environment it was remarkable to see the similarities, but also a lot more of the complexities that I think exist in the educational environment. I've been incredibly impressed with the teachers, the healthcare administrators who are working tirelessly and the administration itself to be able to create this environment, which is not easy. I want to echo Dr. Su in saying this is a very dynamic, fluid situation - data does change weekly. We very much want our children to have a consistent experience as they can, all the while we want to make sure that we are safe and being as thoughtful as we can with any upcoming decisions that are before certainly all of you. I've been very honored to be a part of this. I hope I can continue to help and answer any questions.

Frank Giacalone, Director of Public Health, City of Newburyport for past five years. The pandemic is constantly evolving. His department communicates with the State on a daily basis as numbers change and cases go up. We are a green level right now (low-risk community). In working with Superintendent Gallagher, Frank thinks the plan addressed a lot of the issues and concerns related to public health in terms of trying to get COVID not to spread and spike in Newburyport. With social distancing, contact tracing and communication with Cathy Riccio as cases pop up, we have a lot of support from the public health department in the school department to get the kids back as quickly as possible in a safe and methodical way. The data changes on a daily basis, and it's critical that we have the most up-to-date data. This plan addresses the options of when to progress, either increase the population of the schools, go with total remote or total in classroom. We just opened school, so we need to get the real-time data as well to see if all the measures that are in place works.

Mayor Holaday commented that Mr. Giacalone is very important. She asked how data about positive cases is collected and how is it determined a positive case. How is that added to our data?

Frank Giacalone explained the process. Information of positive cases for Newburyport residents is received via a text alert from the Maven System. They check the database for case information to start an investigation which includes case contract tracing, which is very vital so it won't spread. We want to know when and if a person did/didn't have symptoms. We start the clock for any isolation of that case. It will be 10 days from the first day that they showed symptoms and then it mushrooms out - who were the close contacts. Close contacts are someone that's within 6' for 15 minutes (not just in one sitting - it could be spaced out throughout depending on the situation). The State said to take it as a case by case basis. It's that close contact that we need to have quarantined for the 14 days, even if they test negative they still have to complete that quarantine process as well. The information they get is personal and sensitive and cannot be given to the general public. He stated they keep getting questions about who are the people to help stop the spread. Frank stated they have daily calls with these contacts and make sure they quarantine properly, and we do a follow-up.

Brian Callahan said Boston.com has Massachusetts removed four states from the exempt safe state list for people to travel here. The map shows basically the entire country in red except for a handful of New England states that are white. The article talks about data and gives a link to [COVIDexitstrategy.org](https://www.covidexitstrategy.org), which shows a totally different map. Where is the data that the public is reading in the newspaper coming from?

Mr. Giacalone asked which data are we talking about?

Brian Callahan said this is today' boston.com. It says Jersey is back on the red, so only people in these states can go back and forth in Massachusetts.

Mr. Giacalone said right.

Brian Callahan noted that within this article it says that Massachusetts does not meet its own criteria to be classified as lower risk, and then it links to this which it's not all red - the whole west coast is yellow. So what is the correct data. I sent Dr. Su one that was 6 pages.

Mr. Giacalone said the data don't know which ones are right. The data we get for the positive cases are based on a 14-day window. During those 14 days it's based on population per number of confirmed cases per 100,000. That's where the level would rise or lower, so when we were in the yellow, we had a spike of about five positive cases and it could be as little as that going to change the risk level so with that 14 day window we had very low positive cases, and we dropped back down to a green. In terms of the data, it could be from the CDC that you might have some different numbers, but on the State website there is a single database even for travelers they're supposed to log on and answer those questions and obviously get tested, but that's hard to follow up because it's all based on the honor system.

Superintendent Gallagher said we have Dr. Su, Mike Allard, Cathy Riccio - you're always here so if anybody has questions. He asked Dr. Su to talk through the metrics and the thought process...

Dr. Su thanked everyone that spoke. A lot of good points were raised and some need to be clarified. . A lot of people mentioned will the vaccine be a long time away. The clarifier there was and this was when we all look back and it will reflect and agree not clear that any of the mechanisms - so if the State says it's okay we're changing the recommendations and this is the case for these specific guidelines that we've been going by this whole time. We're now taking this part out. Anytime that happens on a State level if those changes happen then we can re-evaluate what we would be able to do in terms of potential implications with bringing people back so it does not necessitate a vaccine that is given to everyone to go back. One example I agree with a lot of people who spoke that the vaccine by the time it gets to us - we don't even know the efficacy of it but that is going to be ways off, but something that is perhaps more realistic in a shorter term are some of these ultra cheap fast rapid tests that have started to emerge that you can buy like a hundred of them pretty inexpensively. I don't know all the data about the testing parameters of that for sensitivity specificity ppv etc., but let's say what was something that now became readily available in our community and everyone could test themselves every day before school. Certainly that would have a dramatic impact on this entire situation and could be a potential viable way where then our whole system - we are then able to re-evaluate to bring people back. Certainly that list I agree was not clear in terms of it read as if every single thing needed to be met but the intent was no and in this case we're relying on the State in terms of guidelines and saying this is a new step and that feedback from them of saying we're changing this part before we would move on but it's certainly not a vaccine that's disseminated to everyone. That was an example of if that did happen.

It would certainly indicate changing direction fully and not worrying about a lot of things that now we're spending a lot of time worrying about. Some other great points that I thought were brought up that I think as a team we would agree should be clarified in the document was the point and the clarification of averages of things over a period of 3 weeks. As someone who looks at data and inherently I'm a statistician. I hate outliers and I think when it comes to looking at something that is a robust change one of the imperative things of that is to look at things like averages. So certainly when we see a spike particularly if that spike is explainable I think that doesn't mean okay all of a sudden we go back, change directions. The idea of changing that to the three weeks I think that's certainly something that I would think the team would agree with and that was in the essence of what we were trying to communicate. One of the other important points that needs to be emphasized and also came up in a lot of the specific questions was as we list criteria of things that we were considering one thing we all need to be sympathetic to is in the current environment every case that we've had so far and we've had 4, has been situational and in very specific ways. There are the contact tracing which has indicated different ways that we handle that person, different people who we indicate this to. We are using the general guidelines that are specified in the CDC and on a State level each case is - our reaction is sort of tailored to that case. Similarly when we see cases on the level of the larger community whether it be the outbreak on Merrimack College or the more recent outbreak in Middleton we have to recognize that each one of these things are situational and ask fundamental questions. For example is the outbreak in Middleton that is isolated to a specific community. Is that relevant and how does that impact our community and how does that impact our schools. This is where while we have listed guidelines if there are scenarios that we know are not impacting us in it that larger more robust way of impacting us in it that larger more robust way of averaging things over time or we know it's a particular situation. Does that mean now that all of a sudden we're in red and we have to immediately switch to remote? No this is an example where we have criteria but we need to have some level of latitude to say this scenario when it's isolated to one facility and the individuals are largely only in that facility that's not mandating that we should move to remote because it's not affecting us and this is where as much as it may be difficult to say we can't have a perfect algorithm for every scenario. We have to appreciate that each scenario at this time needs to be thought of carefully and our response needs to be appropriate so in the case of the outbreak at Merrimack College or at Middleton where I would argue neither one of those, even if those towns go red, would necessarily mandate us changing and going remotely because we know enough about the scenario to know that's not a broad level impact and it also doesn't impact a three week average in those numbers. There may be other cases where the opposite occurs and in even the most recent communication that went out of that outbreak in the school in terms of people that are being tested. We don't know that particularly what's going to come out from that but one can imagine a scenario where let's say something much more relevant to us in our local community happens where maybe the metrics of our town don't necessarily change because maybe some of the people who this is affecting that are relevant to our school don't actually live in our town but create a dangerous scenario in our schools, yet the metrics that we wrote down are not met but this is now a serious issue because there are significant number of positive cases in the school. That is something again that we may not be looking directly at the criteria that is listed but may mandate a response to do something more extreme to protect the safety of our school. Those are examples of us trying to set a general framework yet it's important that in all these cases we do look at them one by one. We don't consider outlying in things that happen to have a dramatic effect on us if we can sit back and look and say that's not having a huge effect on our particular school and do this in a measured thoughtful way for each incident and I have to give Cathy Riccio a tremendous amount of gratitude because I think in the events that have happened so far in our school with the cases each one has been treated slightly differently. I'm grateful and happy to say that when we look back

retrospectively we've made the right call in pretty much in all the cases and have prevented any further spread that's my overall thought that I wanted to bring out to the people who had questions and to you here that aspect that while we have criteria we also need to have some flexibility.

Superintendent Gallagher stated that Mike Allard assisted us with a lot of our safety and health protocols with Cathy Riccio and the nursing staff, and asked him to follow up on some points that Dr. Su made.

Mike Allard said it was pretty remarkable when you look at a set of criteria that's coming and to the credit of everybody who was involved despite that there were certain standards to Dr. Su's point where it may say 3' apart between desks. When you get into the practicalities of looking at 2 desks that are 3' apart and somebody's been walking down the middle of that aisle, that 3' becomes 1 ½ feet pretty soon. When the measures were developed to be able to be incredibly safe and then put everything in as much as they could in place prior to the school year because the reality is we've seen this. We are going to get COVID positive people in our community. It's already happened. It will happen more. The question is the protocols that the team has developed and continues to evolve to try to create a safe environment is absolutely critical and one of the things that we've talked about and it bears reminding. We are still in the first surge. We have not gotten to the 2nd surge. That creates unfortunately for all of us a dynamic in which you create this framework because you need some elements of metrics to go by; but as Dr. Su said, when we look at all the different factors that may come into play, it does require looking at them holistically in addition to what obviously our governor and our local officials have determined. Part of my message for the for the School Committee is to be able to look at this and be cautious knowing that there are people in this community and working in the school systems who want those children back, but at the same time being able to continue what I think has been a very good start within the school community where looking at it through the eyes of my own kids. It was a great orientation. Today my daughter went into her 9th grade class. It's the first time other than orientation as a ninth grader that she's been in school and it went well and that's a good news story. Hopefully our trend lines in our community will continue such that we see these larger groups of averages maintaining at a low level. I agree a 3 week average is actually something to consider, and we'll be able to get to that stage but as you guys know there are some interesting windows of time that we have in which we will get to the holidays that will create another interesting element not just in our school systems but also in our global communities where people gather. We're all indoors a lot more and the potential for more infection is a strong possibility.

David Hochheiser said in the long term I'm thinking about how long we might be in this situation and if we are a little bit more creative we could have kids back by using alternatives. He asked if Mike could envision a way to either to make sure we can maintain what we have, if not even bring them all back somehow. We would go from being creative to being experienced.

Mike Allard said anything possible. It usually starts with some creativity, and a lot of money. Setting up the field hospital we had one big advantage, the Boston Convention Center which is 3 football fields long, 2 ½ football fields wide and fits 1,500 patients if we had a surge. It does start with the discussion around space and having the capability from a space standpoint to be able to be safe. If we get more rapid testing as was mentioned, I think there are some game changes out there that can re-conceive. This is the part of the balance here because right now it may be space which is very cost intensive and very difficult to acquire, but that doesn't mean you can't get creative around that. Looking down the next couple months, we know that Yale has developed a saliva-based test that does have a much more rapid turnaround than that's being distributed throughout the northeast in the country. Not everybody's going to have that accessible. Eventually if there could be even more dynamic tests that the civilian

can use. That could come into play so you could end up, hypothetically, you end up spending 200 million on this great new facility only to find out that in January we've got this plethora of rapid tests and that facility isn't necessarily useful anymore.

Bruce Menin said six cases may not seem like a lot, but if six is in one school, suddenly we may have to respond differently. Is that sort of a clarifying statement about what some of the challenges are?

Mike Allard said he would agree with that. Over the summer we heard about parties on Cape Cod that were super spreader events that spiked the Massachusetts COVID positive rate for that week. Does that mean that the rest of Massachusetts is affected by that? Some communities may have been. Your clarification is spot on.

David Hochheiser asked do you think it's possible to start now. Do you think it's too early to start thinking about what that could look like - what would it cost - what are the parameters so we're prepared. A lot of people think that if we knew what September would look like in April we could have spent all those months planning for it, but we didn't. A lot of the questions we're getting from the community was what would it take, and I don't know if it's too early to start thinking what could we do, what are possibilities.

Mike Allard doesn't think it's too early. When looking at the Mass General Brigham Health system they're collectively looking towards July of next year. War gaming out some scenarios is important to do right now for sure.

Bruce Menin asked if we covered some questions that we have been receiving.

David Hochheiser said one thing we heard in the comments was about the State recommendations. If the State says 3' is safe, why aren't we doing 3'? Is it safe to say that sometimes the State metrics and the State suggestions aren't what we should necessarily be listening to locally?

Mike Allard said I'll let Dr. Su give some perspective. What I would say is obviously it's sort of the minimum right - certainly where State recommendations are for a certain number or a certain element as a baseline - that's the starting point in some cases that can be the right answer, but in other cases this community has been very fortunate at how low it has been, and so if there are additional steps that don't set the apple cart of course, that's the trick. Sometimes you can go above what the State is requiring or in a different direction if it doesn't.

Dr. Su said I know you also spoke with this, as well as the 6'. One thing that's difficult is even the fact that at the State level there were conflicting guidelines on this. If you look at the 3' metric, as soon as you have a 3' metric and you have one person walking up and down that aisle, that 3' metric becomes less than a foot on each side. Those are the things we need to be thinking about - it doesn't take a PhD to sort of say that there's some concern once we get to that distance, and we know these are kids who aren't necessarily always following Mass guidelines and regulations. For now 6' is really the precautionary thing to have in place. One of the things we have to look at is evidence and data, and one of the things we do see is in the cases that we've had so far with the protective measures we've put in place - We haven't seen it spread. If we cut that in half, I'm not saying we know exactly what we'll see. We do know though, what we've seen in other settings where desks have been reduced to 3' with someone walking up and down, so now you're at a point where on either side you're within much less than a foot and those guidelines, even if when that happens, even the parameter of the space and what's coming out of the mask is being violated and especially of the aerosol which someone mentioned earlier that in school when that happens and everyone looks and gets nervous. We need to just respect the virus and respect that these things are happening and that this can happen. For right now we need to maintain some level of equilibrium as we are having an on average of one case a

week, and make sure that we are maintaining an equilibrium and that this isn't starting to go up, simultaneous with a point in time with a fall knowing that cases are going to be going up. I would argue that especially given that right now we know and we are seeing by the data throughout the nation that cases are going up. It's not time to start relaxing the 6' guideline that was originally put in place simply from the fact of the matter that even if you said 3' is immediately when you have someone walking down the aisle of a six foot you're three feet.

David Hochheiser asked, how do we read the State reports received on Wednesday and how are we going to know when to open and what's right?

Superintendent Gallagher said I think that's for us as a district and we're fortunate because Dr. Su is also looking at that data pretty much on a daily basis and is speaking with Cathy Riccio on a daily basis. One of the important pieces for tonight is this metric that has been developed as the virus - it's a fluid document and we're going to continue to work together as Dr. Su said, maybe identifying more specifics in the document, but we're going to adjust and adapt to a lot of the things that are happening on the ground so for us moving into the summer time with how in working with our task force in the medical professionals here we didn't have the luxury of bringing a whole community in doing focus groups like we normally do. It was really fast and furious to get back to a reopening plan where our goal in Newburyport was to have some sort of in-person. It's our number one priority, in the safest way possible. So now that we're in a hybrid model and the High School started today it gives us a little more time working with our health professionals in the school community to go back and to try to create more of a process and communication with the community but from after July 4th to July 31st that we were getting guidance per week so we didn't have the luxury of sifting through a lot of information. Moving into the school year and working with the people that we've been working with since July I think we can strategize in ways to communicate and work on that process.

David Hochheiser said so we're right now talking about November 2nd and we think people might know if that's feasible.

Superintendent Gallagher said in our plan we had a decision on October 19th as we were looking at the health metrics.

Dr. Su said one of the clarifying factors of the team was the opening phases. Looking at being cautious, not to look at your spikes but looking at things over averages is that time frame was specifically specified because it enabled us to have in the High School because it's a two-week rotation that we'll have one full rotation of high school students and then we will have a second full rotation but during that second full rotation if there was a case or anything the first time it enables us two weeks to assess any potential exposure the first time. The four week increment was used on purpose specifically with regard to looking at the High School and the potential effects of that and the fact that it is a two week cycle to get through all the students in the high school.

Superintendent Gallagher said we did have high school students back today and the more that students are back with the faculty you start to develop those systems and the protocols, and the students and the faculty adjust, following those throughout the day so we also want to have that comfort level where students and staff are comfortable going through a couple cycles with 25 percent looking at a data and then increasing that. Students and staff were glad to be back and getting confident with people in the building. That gives us a good two weeks for that - those two cycles rotation.

Sheila Spalding is concerned that date is very close to Halloween, and kids are coming back after possibly being exposed and perhaps not testing positive yet. They could be spreading the virus.

Superintendent Gallagher said all holidays are a concern and the team is always discussing. What are the holidays going to look like and monitoring that. Our goal is to constantly stay in person as long as we can. We're going to need a lot of community support with this. We need to feel comfortable with our safety protocols and working with students with structure that they are wearing masks, social

distancing, and hand washing. But also the community needs to follow the same health protocols. That's something we're looking at with Halloween and other holidays

Sean Reardon said at next meeting on the 19th he would like to hear from Principal Wulf how those two weeks have gone and what 50% look like. How does that change what they're already doing?

Sheila Spalding asked Cathy Riccio what happens with siblings when a student tests positive. How is that handled?

Cathy Riccio said if a patient, a student or family tests positive, then that whole family is a close contact to the student, so they would be asked to quarantine for 14 days. The COVID positive patient is isolated for 10 days. We've been in school 11 days - we've had 60 injury visits, 174 illness visits (mainly respiratory, gastrointestinal, general illness, fatigue, headache; 72 medication administration 155 treatments; 93 other health office visits non-encounter activities means case management absentee investigations telephone calls depressions, students dismissed from school for illness suspected COVID 23. That would be if we would have two different symptoms we're asking everyone stay home till you get your symptoms resolved either get a diagnosis or get it ruled out and then you're back in school again real quick. We have had two student positive COVID cases, two staff positive COVID cases. We currently have 23 students quarantining and 11 staff quarantining. Absence days due to illness have been 102. Absence days due to quarantine right now 24, but that's going to increase starting tomorrow. Every day the virus reacts differently in your community. We look at the statistics but we also situationally look at what is individually happening inside the and how's that going to impact. Once a week we gather together discussing what is currently happening. I think I'm the luckiest nurse leader in the whole State - who knew I had all these parents with this expertise. Commander Allard is the one that said I had to convince my staff that it's safe to take care of COVID patients. Some people were scared. I had to convince them we put the protocols in place, the safety protocols in place and we want to give them confidence and I appreciated that experience. I appreciate the expertise of Dr. Su because I can talk with her about situations. I talk to the Board of Health many times and it's a real privilege to work with this whole team and get the guidance of the principals and Sean. I'm also on the Statewide Safe and Supportive Schools Commission. That group of people got together today because we're writing new guidance for creating safe and supportive schools. We were asked how did you start your school year, did you just instantly jump into academics or how did you begin to read with your families and begin to address each student's needs. What are their concerns? I could say Newburyport with the Principal's guidance put a 15 day plan in place to begin to address those social emotional needs and we had a plan and it was great to be able to say that. You can't get to academics until you meet the students needs and they're feeling very confident and they've got their needs met.

Bruce Menin asked Cathy Riccio if those numbers were quantitatively different this year than they may have been in other years.

Cathy Riccio said this is certainly a much different start of the school year. We've not seen a huge amount. With the safety protocols and the way that the principals have designed things and the different structures we put in place with guidance from the medical advisors such as Commander. Day 11 – it's a good start.

Sean Reardon said Councilor Khan stated we can only control what we can control in the schools - outside the community we just can't. I've got an uptick of e-mails this week, particularly from South end parents, about seeing groups of kids not wearing masks up and down the street. What as a community can we do, or even as a school system, to beef up our outreach to being all in this together?

Superintendent Gallagher stated communications have been sent to parents. Cathy Riccio sent out communication beginning of the school year about all of us are in this together. It would be very helpful

for families to continue these protocols when you're out and about, such as at the skateboard park or riding their bikes - Social distance and wearing a mask especially if you're in different groups. On the school side we can encourage that. I don't know how much I can enforce.

Mayor Holaday said it's a challenge. She updates the community almost weekly over cable on Thursday afternoons. There is a pandemic fatigue. She issued the mandatory mask-zone because it was really getting out of control. 2,000 masks were ordered - the white ones with the clipper ship. We have people handing out masks to people. We've also done a huge video about Newburyport and I think that's been part of the draw of people coming to the city because they look on the website - they see a lot of information about COVID and our numbers - they see that we have mandatory masks and we did this whole video that with them - you bring the mask - we bring them. It had over a million hits and it only went out in a 50-mile radius. Maybe that would help if we did one specifically targeted towards students.

David Hochheiser said kids could do psa's for their age group and we could start showing them across social media - maybe like a banner contest.

Mayor Holaday thinks we should explore this because there's no question that everything we're hearing and what Dr. Su and Command Allard mentioned - the surge is coming. We look across the country - at what's happening in Europe and we have to do something. I don't want to get to the point where I have to put mulch in the skate park again, and I'm sure Brian doesn't want me to do that either.

Brian Callahan said if it was done properly I wouldn't mind.

Mayor Holaday said we put up signage - they're just not listening.

Sean Reardon asked how many districts have moved to remote learning because a kid had a party. It can have a huge impact on not just the school, but the whole community.

Sheila Spalding asked if there's a way to track places kids are hanging out without masks, such as the bike path down near the swings. Maybe a survey to ask if parents have seen kids in any area in our city so we would know to monitor those places or perhaps put signs.

Mayor Holaday asked what do we do? I can see 10 kids in the skate park and say "Come on Guys'," or you see a mom pull up and drop off 6 kids - they're not related - none of them have masks. They go in the skate park, down town, or just roaming everywhere, so without having some type of fine or penalty it's difficult. PSAs do the right thing: know where your kids are, be sure they're with families, be sure to have masks, maintain social distancing. It's a real challenge because we don't have fines. We're trying to do a positive thing here.

Sheila Spalding said it might help if Sean did a survey to find out these areas, and then give that information to parents. Some parents may be working and may not be aware their teenager is hanging out down town. If they know that their teenagers were seen without masks, it would give them an opportunity to talk to their child.

Brian Callahan said at the skate board park it's disturbing as they're young kids, and the parents are sitting on lawn chairs just outside the fence also without masks while they're definitely teens hanging out in the park. The second part of it regarding the out of school and it's only so much out of control - this is towards the health director. Seabrook is right there. I don't know what the rules, are but some you can go in one store and another will make you wait outside - some employees wear masks. Is the health department in direct regular communication with Seabrook regarding their cases? I've said this multiple times - one of the towns on the list was Woburn and I bet everybody in this room has been to Seabrook multiple times;

Mr. Giacalone said they have not been in constant communication with Seabrook. They obviously have their own state guidelines for COVID - we do monitor if there's any clusters or things like that.

Brian Callahan said it's an imaginary line.

Mr. Giacalone said we all look at the surrounding communities to see if there are any outbreaks.

Brian Callahan wanted to clarify because it was not in the list. The list ended at the border. People who live here are there all the time, whether it's to go shopping or eat. It may as well be part of Newburyport.

Mr. Giacalone said New Hampshire is one of those low-risk communities where travel back and forth even for a day is allowable. You don't have to call in to say that you were out of state and you don't have to quarantine, so obviously if their case level went up and put them in a different risk category - we would react accordingly.

David Hochheiser said I like what the Mayor was saying about keeping things positive because you can't really scold kids into compliance - but maybe some more modeling. Maybe we can start giving masks to the kids. Maybe use them as rewards in the schools. They might be interested in that. A lot of the people asked me about consequences because kids have been happily back at school. I've also had more than one person write to me and say my kid came home today and said everyone's got their masks under their noses and the kids are walking around the halls. We got one e-mail talking about 10 minutes between classes the high school kids are hanging out - kids aren't wearing their masks and maybe that's something that over time the protocol picks up. Schools can't send kids home for many things at all. It's a legislated thing - I don't know how to get around that. It is going to have to be a positive culture built piece that gets kids wearing the masks more often. Mr. Gallagher, you know you can't send the kid home if they show up without a mask.

Superintendent Gallagher said "I won't".

David Hochheiser said there are very few things you can send a kid home for, so it becomes difficult. I continue to see people congregating in local sports leagues - the softball, flag football practices in Mosley, but the parents hanging out on the sidelines and the people at the fields on Merrimack without masks. I think those are places of natural congregation, basketball courts down at Cashman. It's where groups of 10 to 15 multi-age kids come together and all have to be contact traced out of school. People have been playing basketball inside all summer - I don't know if we know who the people running those leagues are, but maybe we could push some outreach. My experience is that coaches have a ton of influence over kids and if coaches can enforce kids having masks on the sidelines, even if not on the court, even driving by and watching the soccer/practices along Low Street - some have masks, some don't. .

Mayor Holaday said another thing we could do is pass a policy within any organized sports that use the fields - there are requirements follow and if not, then your permit is pulled. We could try to set that tone.

Sean Reardon said the State is trying to regulate some of those leagues too. I think Newburyport youth soccer has done a great job. I'm there every Saturday at the fields at Cherry Hill and Massachusetts Soccer was there to check out the operation this past weekend - they were doing great.

Superintendent Gallagher thanked all the people who gave so much time tonight and for all the work they've done.

Bruce Menin ran through the agenda for the balance of the meeting. Item #5 is discussion of Massachusetts guides to conduct operations and practices He suggested they be discussed one at a time over the next three meetings and see which work or don't work and whether we have a common understanding of what they are. Item #6 begins discussion of the resolutions - we don't have to vote on them tonight - we can begin the discussion. We have two more meetings before the annual meeting takes place online. We usually designate somebody to go - if we're not going to send anybody this year then we don't need to vote on the resolutions and with Mr. Cole being out of the room I think it's fair to say that he's often been the one to go.

Sean Reardon said that he went last year.

Bruce Menin said yes. We would like to send people if we have people interested.

Mayor Holaday thinks it's really important that we send people this year as there are some key resolutions - give all that's going on in the school system. The last thing anybody needs to worry about is MCAS. We need to take a strong stance and support that resolution - others might not feel as strongly about - but that was one that really jumped out at me.

Bruce Menin asked if other people here are interested in attending online.

Sheila Spalding is interested.

Bruce Menin said we could send more than one person I think.

David Hochheiser said I commend in a second Sheila's going.

Sean Reardon said he would long on if it's virtual.

David Hochheiser said I second and commend Sean's going.

Brian Callahan said the resolution for lowering the voting age - something like this is just like we as a community would think would be great, but it's clearly not legally binding in any way - right.

Mayor Holaday said in fact, it was the State rep I believe from Haverhill who came and met with students at the High School. She asked the Superintendent the name of the group

Superintendent Gallagher said the National Youth Advisory Council.

Mayor Holaday said at the High School of the 22 students 18 said they didn't think they should vote until 18. That surprised me. There were only 2 who felt like they should and other people thought they would just follow their parents so what's the point.

Sean Reardon said it's just a kind of unified democratic stance that's what the organization is taking. It's their way of saying these are the things that we'd like to see.

Bruce Menin said we have actually been there and sent amendments in. Vote yes on this if this amendment is adopted. The intention is not to go over these thoroughly today.

Mayor Holaday said these also became the Massachusetts Municipal Association. Representing all the cities and towns in the Commonwealth. They do a very similar thing at their annual meeting and they come up with these resolutions and policy statements, so those become a unified driver of the legislative agenda, for example the teachers the Massachusetts teachers union the school principals or Superintendents Association. - they try to unify the school districts so that they have a set of protocols or principals of things that they want to push the legislator for.

David Hochheiser said is LGBTQ really not a protected class in civil rights legislation right now.

Bruce Menin doesn't know the answer to that question.

David Hochheiser said resolution number 9 says that they're trying to push that at the federal level. I thought that the sexual orientation was in Massachusetts.

Sheila Spalding said they are in Massachusetts, but not at the federal level.

Bruce Menin said let's keep our fingers crossed they will be at the federal level. MA has enacted that.

David Hochheiser said some of the unfortunate things with these is it talks about ideas but it doesn't give solutions - this one about attendance talks about waiving the monitoring of attendance, but doesn't talk about mandating supporting communities to increase their attendance.

Brian Callahan said that's your amendment.

David Hochheiser said the same thing with MCAS - we could do away with the MCAS test but I'd rather talk about how we're going to force the State to support communities to support the teaching and learning that would increase the scores on the MCAS test. A lot of these seem to think that we do away with the destructive measures that the problem goes away.

Bruce Menin said the process for these tends to be submitted by school committees forwarding - having a discussion of the public discussion and saying this is something we want to support - we'll send it into Massachusetts and ask the entire organization to support it.

David Hochheiser said MASC has no political power so it's not like we're not really influencers by any means.

Bruce Menin said I wouldn't say no political power - I would say not very much.

David Hochheiser said very little.

Brian Callahan asked can I motion that we move to #8 since Steve's not here so that Nancy can go home.

Motion:

On a motion by **Brian Callahan** and seconded by **David Hochheiser** it was

VOTED: To move the agenda to #8 on the agenda Superintendent's Report

Motion passed Unanimously

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Gallagher explained we have two reports from finance and staffing updates from Ms. Lysik and then Ms. Koch will provide Special Education updates.

Nancy Lysik said she sent the reports to the School Committee earlier - we've made some changes and already know what we're going to do with these savings. We used the carryover money for summer salaries - so we were able to save all the Choice money - we didn't spend any - we still had some funds left over so about 800K is our total savings. The substitutes that were removed from the budget and FY21 are going to come from the Kobe grant through the month of December. Supplies and materials that were removed will come from the carryover money, and the remote academy salaries from September through December will come from the city's Kobe grant so that gives us savings as well. We have 1.5 million in Choice. We budgeted a million, so we'll still have 500k left at the end of this year even if we spend it all, which hopefully we won't - still gives us carry over for next year. As far as staffing goes, we still have 3 full time professional positions and we have a number of IA's that are still open - we also have coda RBT's - we had 3 more people this week that went out on leave so those positions will be posted next.

Bruce Menin said that when we needed to make some hires over the summer we did have a pool of candidates to choose from that had been interviewing for positions all through the spring - do you have any sense of what the situation is out there in terms of hiring teachers.

Nancy Lysik said it's very difficult right now for certain positions - the ones we're looking for are speech and language, school psychologists, RBT codas and instructional assistants. Those are very difficult to fill, surprisingly instructional assistants. We put an ad out - we get one - it's very limited - a lot of it's what's going on in the world right now - a lot of people probably don't want to come to the schools - they're not changing positions as much as they usually are and we're covering a lot of positions. We've had a significant number of staff take full year leave of absence and quite a few that have taken the 12 week leave and that continues to grow so they don't get a full 12 weeks now because it ends at the end of December, but they are still taking advantage of that opportunity if they need it.

David Hochheiser said along the line the petition that came to us from the students implied that a large portion of the High School History Department is not working right now - is that true?

Nancy Lysik said we had a number of them that went out on leave but we have some that work remotely and we've also replaced them.

David Hochheiser said we're not running the Model United Nations class.

Nancy Lysik said she didn't know.

Superintendent Gallagher said he could look into that and find out. One of the advisors might be on leave, but he will get more details on that.

Steve Cole said he thought it's going to be done a lot differently this year as years passed.

David Hochheiser said right the model unit is not going to be a thing as it was.

Bruce Menin said maybe, again, I don't want to get into a discussion of specific personnel but that may be something we could pick up in January and do something around.

David Hochheiser said in general it's always a problem when you run a specific course that's tied to a specific teacher - if something happens it's tough to run that course.

Nancy Lysik said we have been working with staff, if we have someone that for a medical reason they can't be in the building, we've had a few that have been more than willing to work remote and handle their class.

Superintendent Gallagher said he would follow up on the Model UN - are they the electives still for the 19th.

David Hochheiser I don't understand the Choice money and the average.

Nancy Lysik said it's not really an average. The school doesn't close out as of June 30th - we have to encumber salaries for the summer for all of our teachers - they've earned the money as of June 30th, but they're paid through the summer so normally.

David Hochheiser said normally our contracts go to the end of summer.

Nancy Lysik said their contract goes from September 1st to June 30th but they're paid over the summer money they've earned because they repaid 26 pays so that money has to be encumbered and usually it comes from Choice. Choice salaries get spent over the summer.

David Hochheiser said by Choice you mean the students who choose.

Nancy Lysik said right, the money we've saved in our Choice salary account.

David Hochheiser said this year we have 12 families.

Nancy Lysik said but we have a significant amount of money in Choice that we've been able to carry over year from year to save - right now it's 1.5 million. We're only going to get about 226 thousand this year - the Choice students - we have a small number now but that amount has built up because for the last 2 years we haven't had to use it, so this year we saved in expense money a million dollars was left over at the end of June in expense that was able to turn over into salary money and pay all of our summer salaries instead of using the Choice money and we still have a little bit left to cover our supplies and materials that were reduced in the budget.. It was about \$800K total that we were able to recoup from the money we were able to save for the year and the savings primarily were in supplies and materials utilities, athletics, substitutes because we were closed.

David Hochheiser said there is a surplus from what we talked about was our 9 month budget in the beginning of August.

Nancy Lysik said no, the monies all accounted for the carryover/money was used for all of the salaries - the small amount that remains the city has given us permission to carry it over into FY21 and we'll use that for supplies and materials - it's really not like we have a ton of extra money we have a small amount that will cover the supplies and materials that were cut.

David Hochheiser said because we didn't initially budget for supplies and materials.

Nancy Lysik said we cut half of our budget to balance the budget.

David Hochheiser said then we realized we're going to have more so we're going to use that.

Nancy Lysik and right, we were hoping that we'd have enough in savings to cover what we cut in the budget and we did, by saving the 700 and something thousand dollars in Choice money that brought our Choice balance up to 1.5 million - we budgeted a million - we'll still have \$500K minimum at the end of the year to carry over so we can budget next year. The more we can save by the school committee always allowing us to use expense money for salaries the better off we are. Why spend the money in expense if you can save it and this year - last year we saved a significant amount.

Bruce Menin said that Choice money is the money that we don't have restrictions on spending.

Nancy Lysik said only available cash that a school department has so like the city would have free cash we have school choice - it has to be spent on student education so either teacher salaries or something due to the students - you can't go out and buy furniture with it or anything but it is the only extra money we have so if you had to hire an extra teacher for a subject you would have Choice money to do that so just like circuit breaker is your money for Special Ed.

Bruce Menin said that money wouldn't be used if we had an outside placement that moved in mid year.

Nancy Lysik said no, it's not used for Special Ed; that would be Circuit Breaker.

David Hochheiser said but things like technology for Title 1 families.

Nancy Lysik said 99% of time the only thing ever approved out of Choice has been salaries.

Nancy Koch provided a Special Education update. They are diligently working on filling open positions. Last week our attorney gave a webinar for all school administrators and Special Ed staff. We filed the 240 and 262 grants today. They are now very busily working on all the standards that need to be submitted to the State for the Tier Focused Monitoring, which is what used to be called the Coordinated Program Review - right now we have standards for Special Ed and civil rights that need to be provided to the State, and they will like Special Ed audits but this year there's no files, no file review, no school visits nor staff interview - it's all documentation.

Nancy Koch said there's one review every six years but there's a mid-cycle review which is in the 3rd year of the 6-year cycle, but this is our Tier Focused Monitoring. It's a whole new format - we are cohort B - so it's all document reviews.

Steve Cole said due to the fact that we're missing some staff is there a plan or a plan to provide compensatory services?

Ms. Koch said we are working on that - it will be addressed on an individual basis.

Steve Cole asked if we had any parental complaints.

Ms. Koch said we are doing our best - we are in open communication with all parents at this point.

Steve Cole said great; that's good.

Sheila Spalding asked how is the backlog coming along?

Ms. Koch said we're moving right along as fast and as efficiently as we possibly can. We are trying to bring children in to be evaluated on their remote day so they do not miss in-person instruction. All evaluators are in contact with parents scheduling these now - we're focusing first on the initial that did not get done, because those children could be denied services versus those who are three year re-evaluations that are already receiving services.

Superintendent Gallagher said for some reason the DSC loves to come in and review Newburyport so we're on that mid-cycle review. I want to credit our coordinated review came back pretty positive - some of the mid-cycle reporting that we have to do is not as cumbersome as a full Special Ed review - we're in good shape but there is still some work to be done with that.

Sean and the Leadership Team gave the School Committee an 8-page bulleted list of questions regarding how the hybrid is going in all the schools and at all the different grade levels. We've been in the hybrid model for 2 weeks. In every grade overall we're doing pretty well. If you go into each one of those bullet points at the Kindergarten grade level and then grades one to three we're getting better and better and the teachers are getting more comfortable with the synchronous and the asynchronous. The Nock Middle School reports out the same ideas as the in person is going very well and we continue to develop the remote and working with students and families - the silver lining with the hybrid is smaller classes because we split the classes into two cohorts. They're getting to know the students and they're learning styles a lot quicker and they're also getting to know the students because it's half of the students in. - A lot of the advisory work and the personalized learning, pbis and the social emotional

piece is underway. Adjustment counselors and counseling in every building is working with students and families - the ones that are struggling coming back - that's been one silver lining. The remote academy is also illustrated here. We have a remote academy from grades 1 - 8. Students are choosing full remote right now at the High School because we're live streaming - that's one of the benefits of the live streaming - so they're live streaming into the class. The High School teachers are getting better at incorporating both at the same time and they're working with the ILTs and teacher leaders to develop more collaboration for the in-person, also the students at home which has been very beneficial - some of the concerns for the students as we move in for that 25% or the 50% for the students that are in the hybrid at the 25% that we feel by November 2nd and if the health metrics and our health team here want to move to that 50% if there is a student really struggling with that who's in the hybrid model, their family or that student does not want to participate in 5% what's nice about the High School models they can go fully remote so they're not going to miss fully remote in the sense of the live streaming in the classes with their classmates. A few of the pages highlighted what's going on all the different levels - a lot of this is also some of that assessment work in assessing students as they're coming in to this school year and you can review that; the next page is about the learning loss and how we've made adjustments to accessing prior knowledge with a lot of different work at the different grade levels that we have here which we also highlighted. We also talked about parents seeing grades on aspen for grades one to three.

On the 19th, as School Committee member Reardon suggested, it might be a good time to bring the principals back to talk about the bullet points and give an overview of where we're at. That would be my recommendation for the 19th.

Brian Callahan asked how is it going district-wide in terms of our band width and getting out and having teachers lose their connection etc.

Superintendent Gallagher said the benefit for us is we have our technical staff in the buildings so that students get on within that class within an hour. We also have tech support for parents and families that's been working pretty effectively.

Superintendent Gallagher said if it was a major problem we'd be hearing about it - we increase the broadband; we had appx 2 gigabytes; we chose to go up to 7 (max is 10). It's more than enough from my understanding from Don Skane.

Brian Callahan said we mentioned this in Joint Ed - consequently asked the kids who are sent home for 14 days because they have a sibling positive or they're positive or however that works in the lower schools if they're remote Monday, Tuesday and then Thursday Fridays they're in the building with basically the same class day as the Monday, Tuesday had been how's that working for those kids because they'd have Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, Friday would be the exact same lesson.

Superintendent Gallagher said for our students that have to quarantine for 2 weeks we have part of the plan is that the remote which then their cohort when those students are in - that's where we have a para professional support staff to work with those students.

Brian Callahan asked if the district is going to prorate or discount class dues or give refunds to families.

Superintendent Gallagher said he'll need to look into that. We're hoping the senior class will be able to do more. Right now everything is scheduled, like senior prom. We may have to prorate it if they're not going to be participating in those types of events.

Brian Callahan asked Mr. Cole if they can put that in the next finance subcommittee.

Steve Cole said sure.

Sean Reardon said that money also goes with that class after they graduate too. That can go towards reunions and things like that.

Steve Cole said usually it's the responsibility of the president to use those leftover funds to have the 5 year first reunion.

Sheila Spalding asked if a teacher needs to teach remote because they're in quarantine, what does it look like within the classroom when the students are there in person. Is it projected?

Superintendent Gallagher said yes, the teacher is going to teach and we'll have either an IA or substitute facilitate the lesson.

Sheila Spalding asked if it is projected on a screen.

Superintendent Gallagher said yes, it's a lot of moving parts but yes, especially now as we've had a couple of the cases - that's what we've been doing. A healthy teacher that's being quarantined is live streaming and working with the substitute on the students that are in person.

Sean Reardon asked if the students in the High School who decided to go remote had to let the administration know - this is the 1st week.

Superintendent Gallagher said yes, the difference with the Remote Academy is totally separate. I'm trying to balance the hybrid and the remote because we're live streaming at the High School; the students had the option of not coming in - they could just live stream with their teacher.

Sean Reardon asked is that something we're keeping data on or are they just saying I'm not going to school.

Superintendent Gallagher said we're keeping data on that. We have to keep attendance for all of these different learning models - If we have a student that's not logging-on, regardless of what grade level, or if it's even the Remote Academy, we're contacting the families and the students and finding out what's going on. Attendance is a big part of that.

David Hochheiser said 15 different attendance goals to our grade book.

Superintendent Gallagher said right. School updates is the other important piece. Principals will provide more specifics on the 19th.

David Hochheiser said just two principals at a time?

Superintendent Gallagher said two at a time instead.

David Hochheiser said every time we bring all the principals here we always say afterward maybe we should have had a couple at a time.

Superintendent Gallagher said all right.

Sean Reardon said he didn't mind that as long as the High School is the most important one that night.

David Hochheiser said that would be the biggest shift.

Superintendent Gallagher agreed. We could do Mr. Wulf and Principal Furlong on the 19th and then the elementary on the following meeting. On the school update now around 143 students that are remote.

Mayor Holaday said she wanted to be sure this chart gets included in our minutes.

Superintendent Gallagher said yes; He would like to take it back though and refine it.

Mayor Holaday said that's fine, this is really talking points and notes. It's good information that you provided advice to the schools with very specific topics and questions and I think this will be really helpful to be posted with our audience.

Superintendent Gallagher said I'll fine tune it then we'll post it.

Bruce Menin said to get rid of the initials because a lot of people aren't going to understand what some of the initials are, and asked if this could get posted online when ready.

Superintendent Gallagher agreed, and will fine tune it as just an update of bullet points for each school. With the remote academy and home schooling remote academy is around 100 and when it's around 143 students. We had appx. 60 students home schooled so that combo is about 200 students that did not want to participate in any type of in-person learning because of the virus.

Sheila Spalding asked for a break down by school.

Superintendent Gallagher said High School students are less than 5. For our next School Committee meeting he will get the specific grade breakdown.

Bruce Menin said we would normally be providing some support for the homeschooling parents. Superintendent Gallagher said correct.

Brian Callahan asked if a kid is never coming in due to homeschooling or remote academy, how is the district handling it if they have a positive case. It means they're never coming into the building.

Superintendent Gallagher said if they have a positive case, first Frank would know. If we didn't know first, hopefully the parents would be calling us.

Brian Callahan said then we're wondering if it's an only child situation - they're never going in the building so then we'll notify.

Superintendent Gallagher said we would get notified because of the COVID positive to the hospital, so they would have to start that contact tracing through Frank's department.

Brian Callahan asked can we release it as we did today - the other one.

Superintendent Gallagher said yes, although it's a positive case and wasn't in school or fully remote, we would still follow the contact tracing. We should follow that same process although it's outside of the school, it could have an impact on the school.

Sheila Spalding asked are you able to share with parents what activities are leading to exposures. I know it's a confidentiality thing, but if it turns out there's a pattern you would be able to share information.

Superintendent Gallagher said like Dr. Su said, it depends on the specific case but typically we're following that guideline; so if you're closer than 6' and you've been with the person 15 minutes or more and they're infectious, then that would constitute as a close contact. If there was obviously a big activity, we would publicize then. It's when we're not following safety protocols that we run the risk.

David Hochheiser asked could we advertise the way companies might advertise, so many days needing OSHA compliance and without injuries in a manufacturing plant - could we say NO. There's a level of anxiety when the headline of the e-mail says middle school student then you could explain all you want especially because you have to be so big - it's just going up that anxiety - the reality is that it doesn't sound like it's coming from school at least for the most part. Maybe that could help a little pride. Somebody who works in a manufacturing plant hurts themselves chopping wood on the weekend - the plant doesn't say one of our workers cut off a finger because that would freak people out. I know we have to report.

Brian Callahan said I don't think you can give someone else a chopped up finger though it's not communicable.

David Hochheiser said it would still happen and would create anxiety if we knew people who worked at this plant who lost a finger last year, but we can't say how or where you would have to think the connection is the faculty. If we could start reporting the good news.

Mayor Holaday said I think it creates a false sense of security especially since there's so much we don't know and just because the school hasn't had a positive case doesn't mean mother, father, sister, cousin, grandma. I think it's too volatile right now. I appreciate what you're saying in terms of trying to calm everybody down but what you see from the e-mails we have people on both sides of this saying please don't open up the High School anymore - I want fully remote - we want all the kids in. Everybody's all over the place and I don't know how many times reporting the cases and what if we missed 6 - what if a bunch come up but that we just found out - I just don't think that's a good standard - it really does create a false sense of security amidst this horrific pandemic and we don't know just where this is going to end up.

Bruce Menin said communicating with the parents the same day and saying what the circumstance is has been very helpful. That's been very clear. I have to think more about what you're saying but so far

the level to which we're communicating when these positive cases happen and what we're communicating about has been good and let's hope we don't have a lot more communications to make.

Brian Callahan said Mayor what if we have a kid who's going to Whittier - that's never going to come out through the district. How does the community know that a Whittier kid who is spending time playing soccer or hanging out here tested positive because the city doesn't send out notices, and Whittier won't send it to anybody who doesn't have a kid there. How would we find something like that?

Mayor Holaday said that's an interesting scenario because that is potentially true – it is a district so Whittier would have to report it. We would get that information through Whittier and then our health department as with any case with contact tracing. It wouldn't necessarily come out to the school community in that same manner but it certainly could once it's released. We certainly could discuss how to manage that piece of information in the community.

Brian Callahan said I'm sure those kids are having normal community involvement here when they're not in that school.

Bruce Menin said it would naturally come in through the Board of health, may be identified as a Newburyport case, even if it's not a Newburyport student.

Brian Callahan commented it's a tough one because the health department doesn't send out e-mails to the city at large. If you look at it on the website maybe.

David Hochheiser said the same thing would be true for day students at Governors.

Bruce Menin said it raises the question how we are communicating with IC or with the Charter School to capture some of that information.

Superintendent Gallagher said if we do start a contact tracing that is going to have an impact on the IC or River Valley we would contact them directly. Our message that I send out include principals of both schools - they're kept in the loop, but if it was going to have a direct impact on anyone in the schools in their schools they would be working with us to reach out to the families.

Bruce Menin said if there was a positive case in either of those schools they would be communicating with us.

Superintendent Gallagher added, or with Cathy Riccio if it was going to have an impact directly on us. This is all new to everybody but as we follow through the protocols all students are in contact tracing and the notification is really essential because once we have that information then we can reach out to the right people and by the contact tracing identify the families that are impacted. We're reaching out to them immediately so we're isolating them right from the general population, and at the same time when I have enough information that's when we're sending out - it's important to notify people immediately when we have information so that's the whole key issue - try to isolate as soon as you can so it doesn't spread.

Sean gave an update on the cultural competency and the work with Michael Eatman, stating in the Friday Memos it has been noted there have been a couple administrative workshops with Mr. Eatman supporting administrators and culture awareness. Some of the goal sessions is the power of the team, creating space of energy and diversity equity inclusion racism and support belonging. Michael really wants a roadmap for the district on things that we would like to accomplish. He thinks it's important to have the school system working with the mayor of the city, so we're scheduling a conference call with Ms. Stephen, the Mayor, myself and Asst. Supt. Bik - so we're all on the same page as a whole community and school community to address these issues in a profound way where we can work on the change that we want to see in the community. It's important to partner with the city and the schools so we're all moving in the right direction - that conversation we're scheduled next week. It's been great being on the human rights commission - last year they asked me to be part of the commission on the board and that groups phenomenal and the partnership is what's going to move our community in the

right direction - they've been awesome especially during a lot of the issues we've been dealing with - so supportive for the schools and in everything we're trying to accomplish - bringing him here to help facilitate is going to be helpful down the road for us.

Mayor Holaday said I want to add to that – We've received 35 applications for the Alliance on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The chair of the Human Rights Committee Amir Abraham will be on the committee. She will provide a list after we make decisions next week. There's a team of 4 people who are reviewing the applicants, and I'll let you know that a committee clearly supports that there has to be an integration of what we are in the community and in the schools.

Superintendent Gallagher provided an update on fall sports. As of Friday Cross Country has 49 girls and 52 boys out for the team. An extra asst. coach was hired to make the cohorts for practice smaller because it's obviously one of our most successful and largest athletic teams. Our Golf team has 18 student athletes - we have a Varsity and a JV and they're off to 2-0 start. Our Field Hockey has 37 student athletes in Varsity and JV. Our Girls Soccer has 76 athletes in the Varsity, JV1 and JV2. Their first game was this past Saturday. The Boys Soccer team has 84 student athletes Varsity, JV1, JV2, Crimson JV2Gold so they have 4 teams underway. The football season was moved to that fall season, the mid-March in April optional conditioning and workouts are scheduled right now following all distance to protocols. Volleyball has also been moved to Fall season too in March and April - same piece optional conditioning workouts with coach following distance protocols. .

Sean Reardon asked are we going to have a student representative this year.

Superintendent Gallagher said absolutely if they're willing and they want to be part of our meeting that would be awesome.

David Hochheiser asked if Mr. Wulf had the Student Government up and running as yet. Superintendent Gallagher said yes.

David Hochheiser said that might be a place to consider a petition like that was set to us and maybe dig a little bit deeper. The student reports always are nice, but to actually find a way to get some voice into the politics of the policies might be that much more meaningful to them. Are just the Winter sports like maybe indoor track, swimming, cheering is that all moved too?

Superintendent Gallagher said there's been no decision on any of that.

David Hochheiser said so traditional winter indoor sports are still working on that. Superintendent Gallagher said we don't know.

Sean Reardon said they have a tentative January first start.

Superintendent Gallagher thought he would could have our athletic director come in around the November 2nd School Committee meeting. He may have information on the winter season, but the MIA in the States are up in the air with that right now.

Steve Cole asked when did we add swimming.

Sean Reardon said we co-op with Triton.

Steve Cole asked what facility do we use.

David Hochheiser said the YWCA - it's our home pool.

David Hochheiser asked hockey?

Superintendent Gallagher said hockey's been pushed back or on hold - everything's on hold for the Winter sports.

Brian Callahan asked if we left the league to do our own Hockey thing.

David Hochheiser said it's ours.

Brian Callahan asked the fee schedule for Hockey was changing?

Superintendent Gallagher doesn't have the fee structure in front of him but since it's our own team now the fee is going to be reasonable.

Brian Callahan said we have to vote on that then because we voted on the schedule on all of the fees as one piece so Kyle will have to figure out what that's going to be and then we can vote again to say OK - right.

Superintendent Gallagher said yes, the Athletic Director is going to do a presentation at the net finance meeting. We could have that discussion at that time too on the Girls Ice Hockey.

Bruce Menin said we can double up to item 5 which would be a discussion of the Massachusetts guide to conduct operation practices - before we do that if I'm reading the room right I think we're good - we could probably push this off for another meeting.

Sean Reardon asked was this something that we were thinking about doing a retreat for.

Bruce Menin said yes, but I also think that it's going to be helpful for us to have a conversation about it.

David Hochheiser said we usually sign these at our January retreat.

Bruce Menin said actually we used to - we signed them either at the January retreat or we signed them at our first meeting in January. I'm fine about holding that off.

SUB-COMMITTEE:

Joint Ed **Sean Reardon** said they met today and also talked about discussing the strategic plan at the next meeting (what's that process going to look like, how's the community going to be engaged, timelines, transparency, posting minutes etc.).

Finance **Steve Cole** said they haven't met since last reported.

Policy **David Hochheiser** said they will meet next Tuesday, the 13th.

Superintendent's Evaluation: **Bruce Menin** and **Mayor Holaday** have not met but started to research on what other districts are doing and what the State guidelines are. They will try to set up a meeting in the next couple of weeks.

ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by **Mayor Holaday** and seconded by **Sheila Spalding** it was

VOTED To adjourn the Business Meeting of the Newburyport School Committee
at 9:20 PM.

Motion Passed Unanimously