

**NATICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**School Committee Meeting**  
**February 5, 2024**  
**6:00 PM**  
**School Committee Room - 3rd flr, Town Hall**

**Posted Date: Thursday, February 1, 2024 at 3:35 PM**

**Open Meeting 6:00PM, Executive Session 6:05PM, Return to Open Session approximately at 6:30PM. Virtual Meeting Accessed Via: [https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2038566119?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2038566119?pwd=TmtsdxgXenQ0YXRlN1FicHVpd3hEZZ09)**  
**pwd=TmtsdxgXenQ0YXRlN1FicHVpd3hEZZ09 Meeting ID: 203 856 6119 Passcode: 987179 One tap mobile +13126266799,,2038566119# US (Chicago) +16465588656,,2038566119# US (New York) Dial by your location +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) +1 646 558 8656 US (New York) Meeting ID: 203 856 6119 Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2038566119?pwd=TmtsdxgXenQ0YXRlN1FicHVpd3hEZZ09> . If any member of the public, attending the meeting virtually, wishes to take advantage of public speak, they should email the School Committee Chair, Shai Fuxman at ([sfuxman@natickps.org](mailto:sfuxman@natickps.org)), one hour prior to the start of the meeting. Your email should include your name, town and your request to be called upon during the public speak portion of the agenda. The School Committee Chair will then announce your name and you will be unmuted and prompted to turn on your video for your opportunity to share your remarks. Per our public speak policy, each speaker will have up to 3 minutes.**

**Posted In Accordance with Provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Sections 18-25**

<b>OPEN SESSION</b>
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- Roll Call
  - Pledge of Allegiance
  - Moment of Silence
  - Announcements
1. METCO FY25 Funding Request

<b>EXECUTIVE SESSION - this portion of the meeting is not open to the public</b>
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1. To Conduct Strategy Sessions in Preparation for Negotiations with Non-Represented Personnel (Permanent Superintendent)
2. To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares.

**PUBLIC SPEAK**

Public Speak is scheduled for a period of fifteen minutes. Each speaker will be permitted a maximum of three minutes during which time they can speak about topics within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. All remarks will be addressed through the School Committee Chair. Public Speak is not a time for debate or response to comments by the School Committee.

- Teacher Representative

- Student Representative

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

1. Formation of a Calendar Task Force

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of a one time donation of \$1,500 to the Natick Robotics Club from Greg Rich of Vivantio, Inc.
2. Approval of a donation of \$1,000 to the Natick Robotics Club from Andrew Blanchard of Teradyne, Inc.
3. Approval of a donation of \$300 to the Chinese Culture Club from Sunrise Montessori, Inc.
4. Approval of a donation of \$600 to the Chinese Culture Club from Sun Tree Early Education, LLC
5. Approval of a donation of \$300 to the Chinese Culture Club from Jessica Allain
6. Approval of School Committee Open Session Minutes Dated 11.6, 11.20, 12.4 and 12.18.23
7. Approval for Change of High School Class Dues from \$100 to \$125 starting with the Class of 2028

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

1. Student Global Travel - Jason Hoyer/High School Dean of Students
2. MA Educators Tour - Helsinki/Tallinn (Tim Luff-Deputy Superintendent, Josepha Blocker-High School Principal, Karen Ghilani-Ben/Hem Elementary Principal)
3. Findings of an Entry Plan - High School Principal Josepha Blocker
4. FY25 Budget Update
5. February 1st Enrollment Report

### **ACTION ITEMS**

1. Vote to Approve Calendar Task Force
2. Approval of the Permanent Superintendent Contract

*Agenda items will be addressed in an order determined by the chair. Times are approximate.*

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**ITEM TITLE:** METCO FY25 Funding Request  
**DATE:**  
**ITEM TYPE:**  
**ITEM SUMMARY:**  
**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**  
**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

Description	File Name	Type
FY25 Budget Summary	2_Natick_Public_Schools_Preliminary_FY25_Budget_Summary_February_5__2024_(1).pdf	Cover Memo



# **Natick Public Schools Preliminary FY25 Budget Summary**

February 5, 2024





# ENROLLMENT

## Natick Public Schools Cohort Survival Only - THREE Year Avg - Post COVID Shutdown Year

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Live Births	417	390	394	397	364	356	380	360	360	360	360	360
School Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33
Multiplier 3 Yr Avg	10/1/2021	10/1/2022	10/1/2023									
Actuals												
PK	0.3227	132	138	124	128	117	115	123	116	116	116	116
K	0.9385	406	356	359	373	342	334	357	338	338	338	357
1	1.0360	359	418	354	372	386	354	346	369	350	350	350
2	1.0054	382	368	426	356	374	388	356	348	371	352	352
3	1.0164	421	395	371	433	362	380	394	362	354	378	358
4	0.9885	394	420	392	367	428	358	376	390	357	350	373
5	1.0149	413	405	429	398	372	434	363	381	396	363	355
6	0.9873	409	411	404	424	393	367	429	358	376	391	358
7	0.9982	434	404	412	403	423	392	367	428	358	376	390
8	1.0152	412	442	414	418	409	429	398	372	435	363	381
9	0.9939	394	420	433	411	416	407	427	396	370	432	361
10	1.0116	384	395	427	438	416	421	412	432	400	374	437
11	1.0116	387	380	381	432	443	421	425	416	437	405	379
12	1.0034	381	394	378	382	433	445	422	427	418	438	406
Pre-K		132	138	124	128	117	115	123	116	116	116	116
k-4		1962	1957	1902	1900	1891	1814	1829	1807	1770	1767	1771
5-8		1668	1662	1659	1643	1597	1623	1556	1540	1564	1492	1484
9-12		1546	1589	1619	1664	1708	1693	1686	1670	1625	1649	1583
k-12		5176	5208	5180	5207	5197	5130	5071	5017	4959	4908	4838
Total All		5308	5346	5304	5335	5314	5245	5194	5133	5075	5024	4954
Change				-42	31	-21	-70	-51				

Calculation based on cohort survival method - HOUSING GROWTH NOT YET INCLUDED

Live Birth Data from Town Clerk 2017 forward, 2023 births forward is estimated, 273 reported thru 9/30

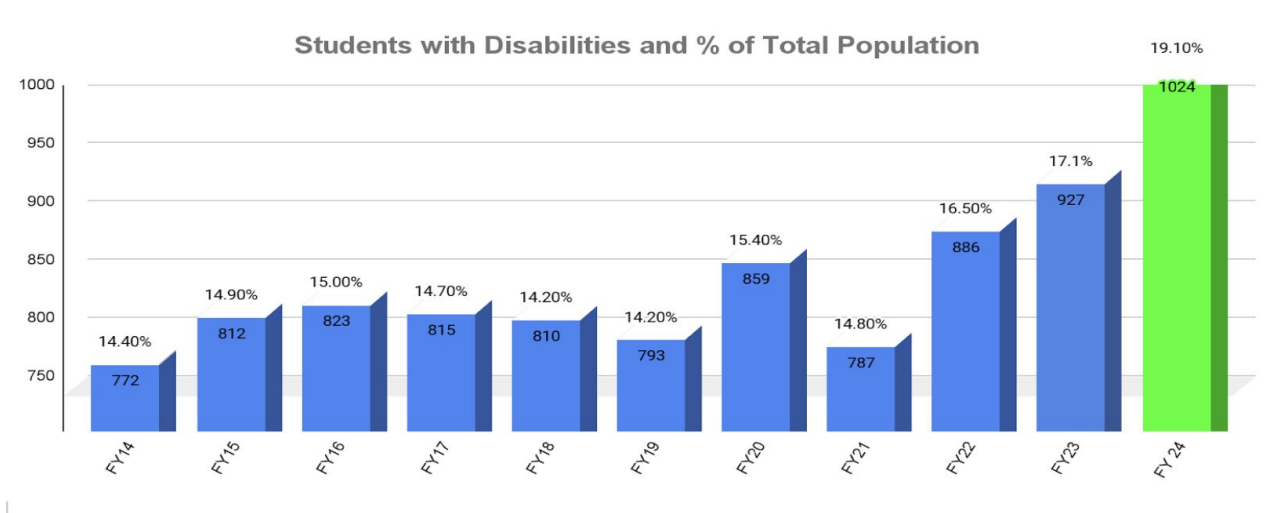
children born, but not yet enrolled

Shaded birth rates and enrollment projection data based on estimated births;

Multiplier is a THREE year average from most recent history available, COVID year and prior not factored in



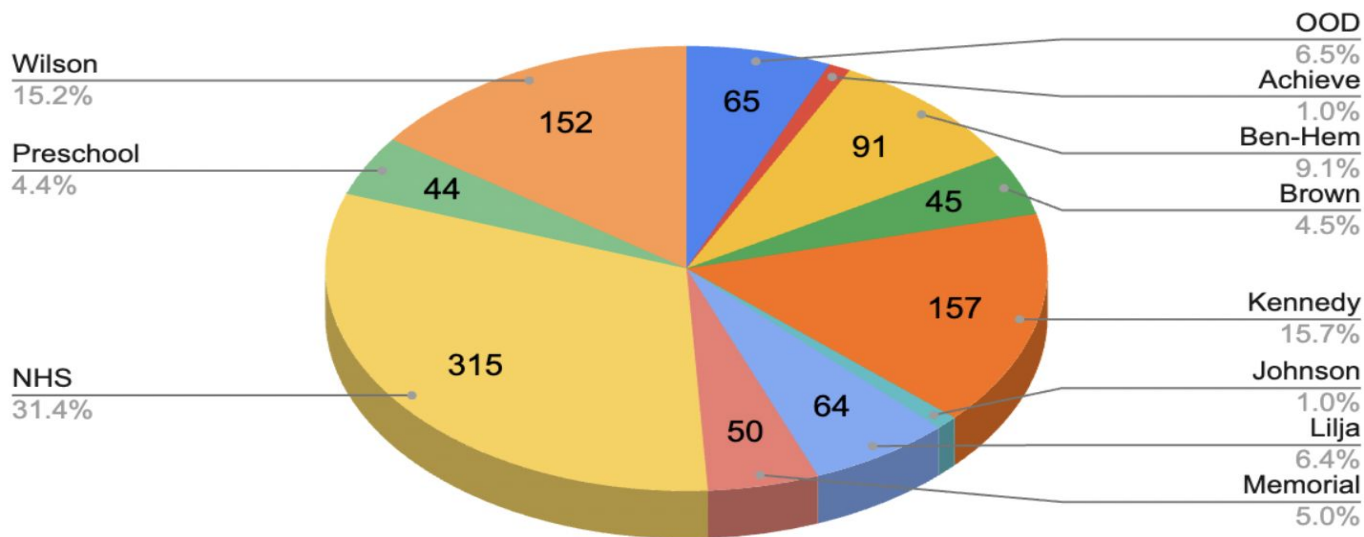
# SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT



Statewide: 19.4

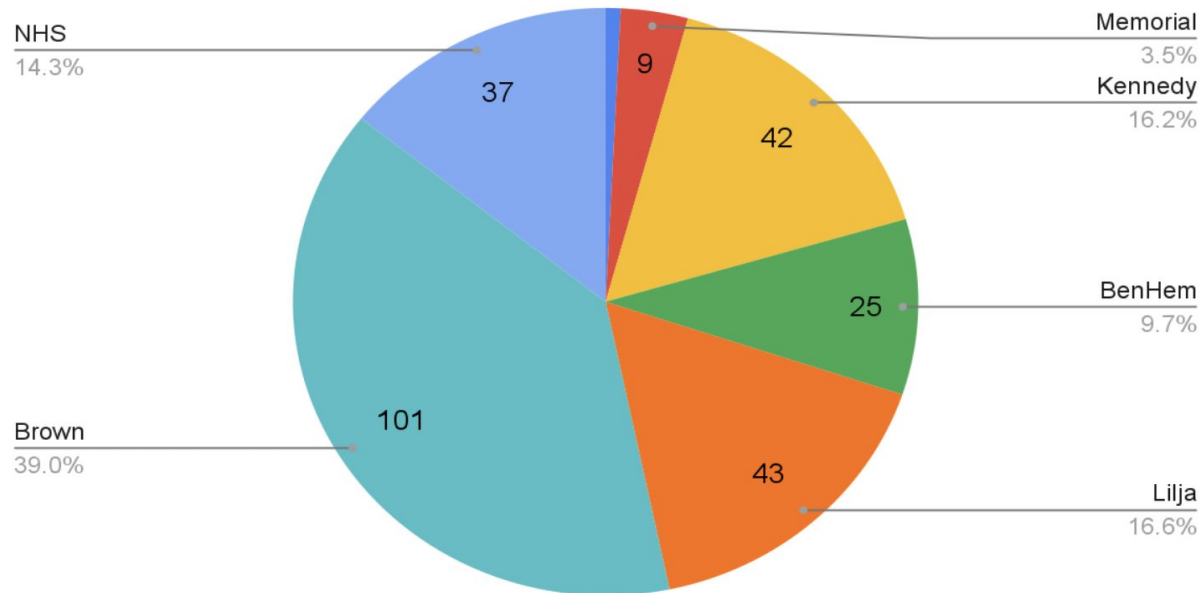


## Special Education Population by School



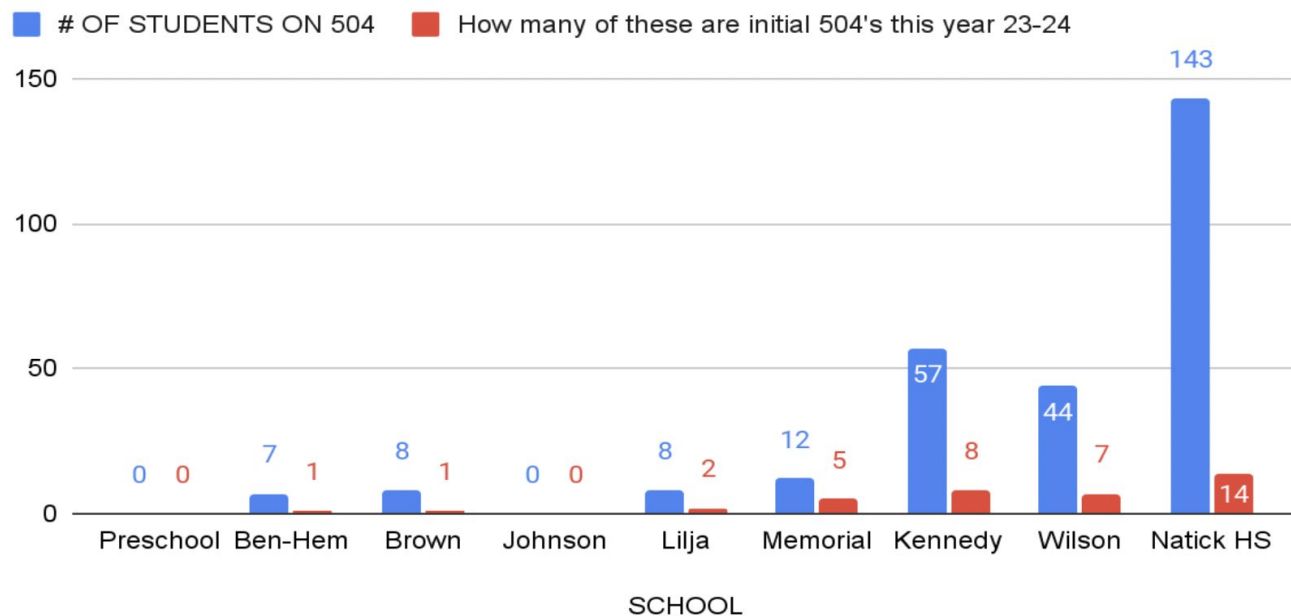


## 23-24 ACTIVE EL STUDENTS; TOTAL=259





## 2023-24 504 Plan Info: Total Plans=281 to date



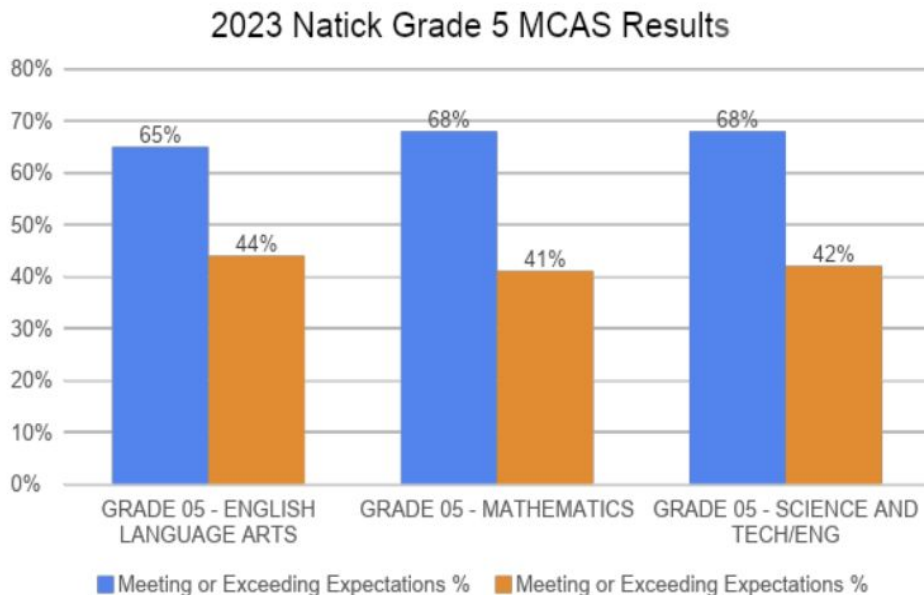


# McKinney-Vento 2020-2024

YEAR	20-21`	21-22	22-23	23-24
Population	41	43	45	65



# GRADE 5 MCAS 2023



Grade 5 is the first standardized MCAS Test which covers Math, ELA and Science, commonly represents the culmination of elementary school.

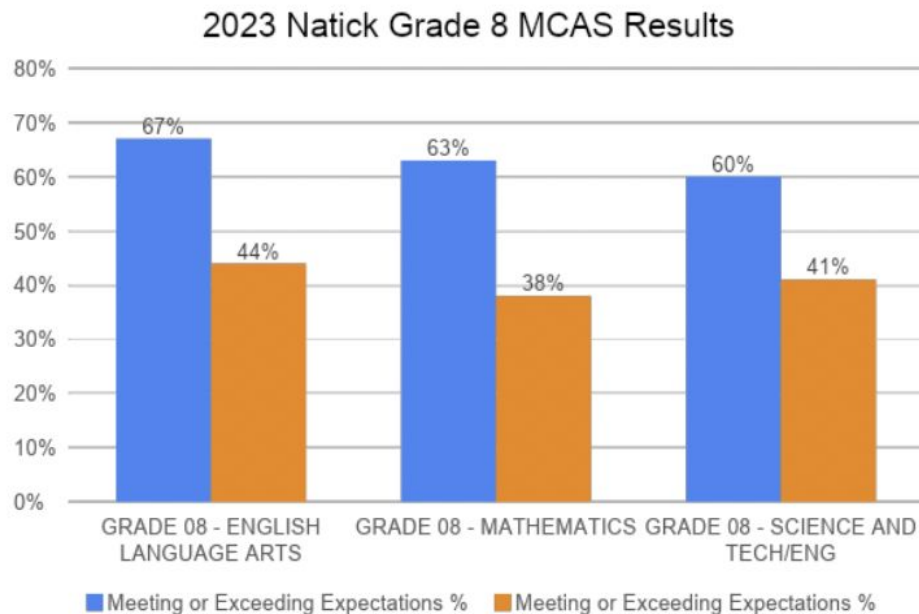
Grade 5 students scored:

- 47.7% higher in ELA
- 65.9% higher in Math
- 61.9% higher in Science

than the state average in the combined Meeting or Exceeding Expectations category.



# GRADE 8 MCAS 2023



Grade 8 is the second standardized MCAS Test which covers Math, ELA and Science, commonly represents the culmination of middle school.

Grade 8 students scored:

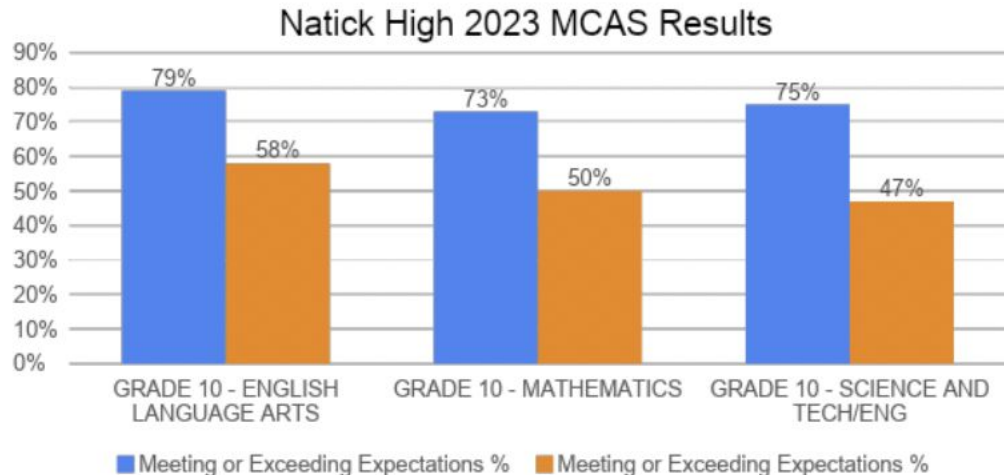
- 52.3% higher in ELA
- 65.8% higher in Math
- 46.3% higher in Science

than the state average in the combined Meeting or Exceeding Expectations category.





# GRADE 10 MCAS 2023



**Note:** "Partially Meeting Expectations" scores are good enough for students to graduate provided they continue to take advancing courses in Grades 11 & 12.

Grade 10 Students will be given 5 opportunities before their Class June Graduation to retake the test to achieve a passing score. **About 96% of NHS students graduate in 4 years, about 97% in five years.**

Grade 10 MCAS is required for Graduation.

Grade 10 students scored:

- 36.2% higher in ELA
- 46.0% higher in Math
- 59.6% higher in Science

than the state average in the combined Meeting or Exceeding Expectations category.

NHS students that score proficient or advanced on the all facets of Grade 10 exam will be considered well prepared for a 4-Year State College or University

[https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement\\_level.aspx?lkid=32&orgcode=01980000&orgtypecode=5&](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?lkid=32&orgcode=01980000&orgtypecode=5&)



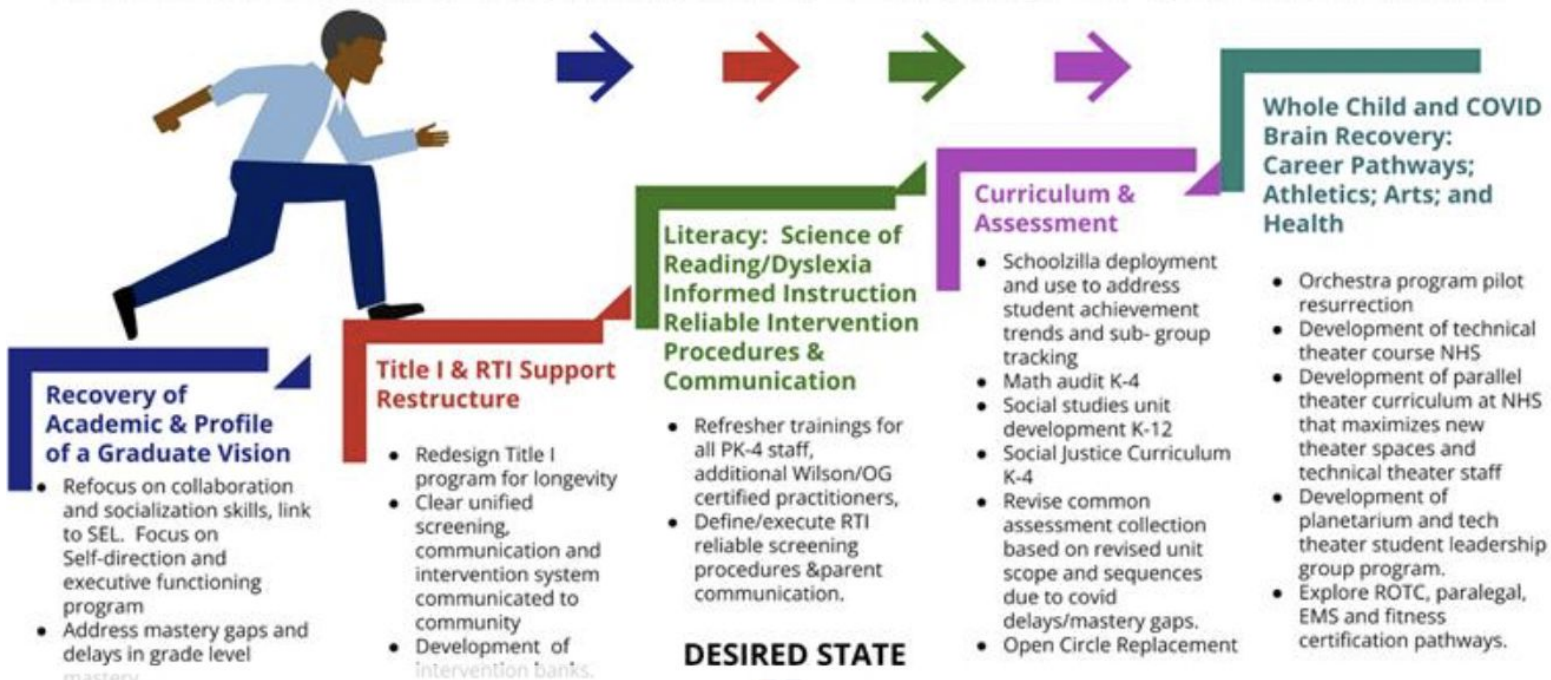
# FY25 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

SALARY OR NON-SALARY	NPS Categories	Sum of FY23 Actual	Sum of FY24 ORIGINAL APPROP	Sum of FY25 LS Budget Request	Sum of FY25 LS Dollar Change	% Change from FY24
SALARIES	ADMIN & SUPPORT	\$ 3,687,484	\$ 3,773,551	\$ 4,054,171	\$ 280,621	7.4%
	INSTRUCTION	\$ 57,333,271	\$ 59,231,202	\$ 65,202,101	\$ 5,970,899	10.1%
	ATHLETICS& ACTIVITIES	\$ 1,300,715	\$ 967,708	\$ 1,201,585	\$ 233,877	24.2%
	HEALTH SERVICES	\$ 1,131,949	\$ 1,132,451	\$ 1,281,758	\$ 149,307	13.2%
	FACILITIES	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
	TECHNOLOGY	\$ 168,550	\$ 192,247	\$ 195,600	\$ 3,353	1.7%
	BENEFITS & EQUIP	\$ 30,650	\$ 30,118	\$ 35,658	\$ 5,540	18.4%
SALARIES Total		\$ 63,712,618	\$ 65,327,277	\$ 71,970,873	\$ 6,643,597	10.2%
NON-SALARY	ADMIN & SUPPORT	\$ 646,556	\$ 1,113,115	\$ 1,201,045	\$ 87,930	7.9%
	INSTRUCTION	\$ 2,947,444	\$ 3,381,111	\$ 3,403,708	\$ 22,597	0.7%
	ATHLETICS& ACTIVITIES	\$ 235,718	\$ 111,872	\$ 110,678	\$ (1,194)	-1.1%
	HEALTH SERVICES	\$ 148,886	\$ 165,140	\$ 195,140	\$ 30,000	18.2%
	FACILITIES	\$ 2,395,243	\$ 3,108,734	\$ 2,719,750	\$ (388,984)	-12.5%
	TECHNOLOGY	\$ 1,004,326	\$ 1,098,900	\$ 1,149,650	\$ 50,750	4.6%
	BENEFITS & EQUIP	\$ 3,235	\$ 3,332	\$ 3,332	\$ (0)	0.0%
	TRANSPORTATION	\$ 3,249,400	\$ 3,280,817	\$ 4,744,066	\$ 1,463,249	44.6%
	TUITIONS	\$ 4,602,983	\$ 5,688,836	\$ 4,370,860	\$ (1,317,976)	-23.2%
NON-SALARY Total		\$ 15,233,791	\$ 17,951,857	\$ 17,898,228	\$ (53,629)	-0.3%
Grand Total		\$ 78,946,409	\$ 83,279,134	\$ 89,869,102	\$ 6,589,968	7.9%



# PROFILE OF A NATICK SCHOOL GRADUATE

*Excel in academic achievement, and Profile of a Natick Graduate (POG) competencies for all groups and subgroups of students.*





# KEY BUDGET ELEMENTS

- Transportation
  - New bid
  - Bus subsidy
- Grant funded staffing positions to support student needs and district STP goals
- Trending need for services
- Athletics
- Out of District Tuition
- Use of one time funding
- Staffing reductions



# CHANGES IN NEW STAFFING

- Trending need for student services
- Elementary Library Media Specialists
- Elementary Assistant Principals
- Elementary and Middle School Math Coaches
- Elementary Math Interventionists
- Digital and Personalized Learning
- Elementary School Counselors
- Director of Social and Emotional Learning and Equity

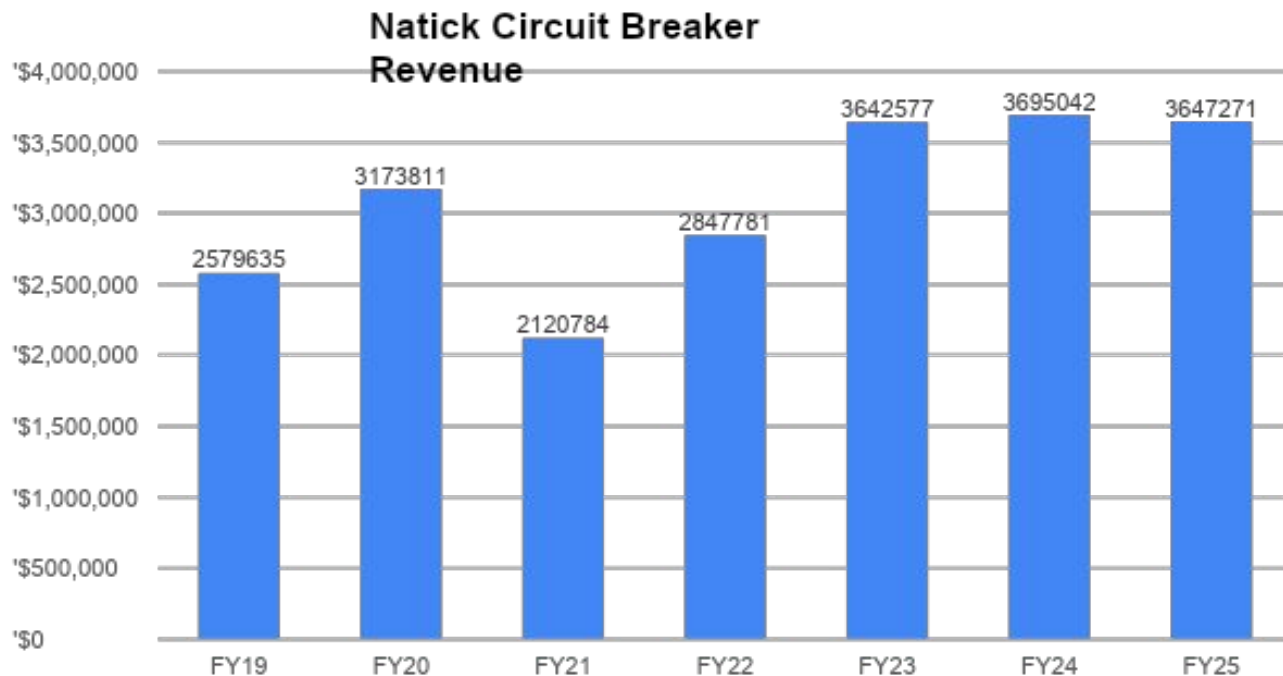


# OVERVIEW OF FY25 BUDGET FUNDING GAP

Original FY24 Appropriation	83,279,134	
FY25 level service at 7.9%	89,869,102	[incl CB offset = 3,381,994]
Difference	6,589,968	
Proposed available funding 4.22%	3,516,165	86,795,299 [Incl 1.6 mi ARPA]
Bus .52%	429,844	
Remainder	2,643,959	
	2,000,000	Additional CB offset
	+149,780	Improvements
		137,280 SS
		12,500 Gen'l
	793,639	Remaining Gap
	-135,000	Johnson Closure
	-658,739	Possible staff reductions
	0.00	Remaining Gap



# CIRCUIT BREAKER REVENUE





# CIRCUIT BREAKER OVERVIEW

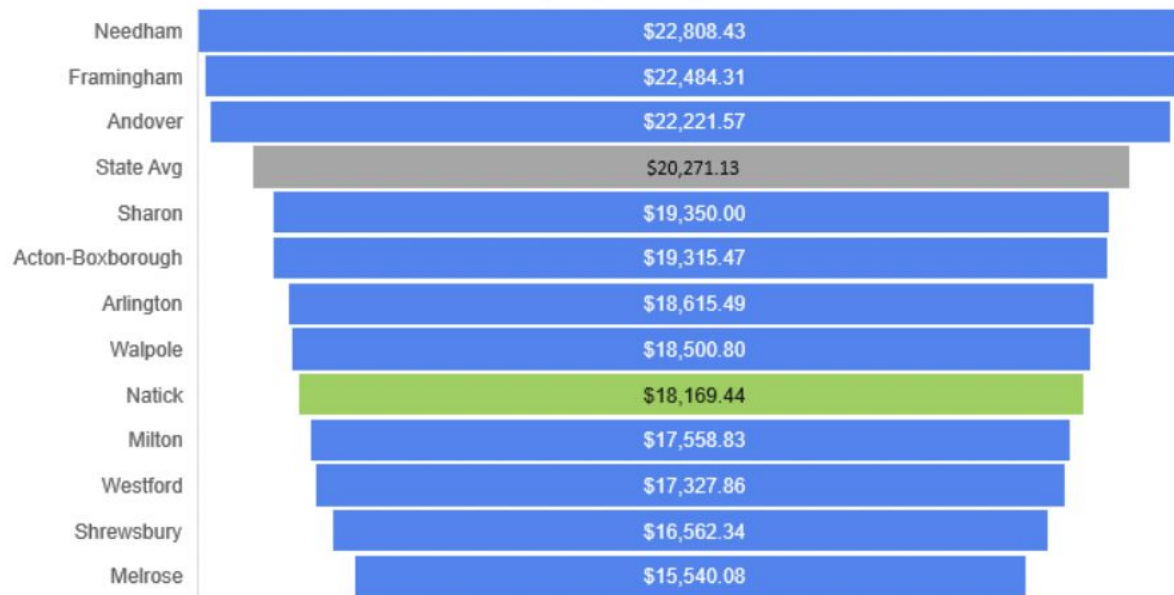
- To be received in FY24: 3,647,271
- Projected use of circuit breaker for FY24: 3,943,821
- Projected amount to carry forward to FY25: 2,700,000
- Projected to be received in FY25: 3,647,271 (70% Reimb)
- Projected offset for FY25: 5,381,994
- Projected remaining in FY25 to carry forward to FY26: 965,277
- Projected to be received in FY26 will be less than for FY25 due to decrease in tuition costs in FY25





# DESE COHORT COMPARISONS

FY22 Total Per Pupil Spending, DESE Cohort





FY25 Budget Hearing scheduled for March 4

Continue discussions with Town partners and civic members



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**ITEM TITLE:** To Conduct Strategy Sessions in Preparation for Negotiations with Non-Represented Personnel (Permanent Superintendent)

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND**

**INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ITEM TITLE:** To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares.

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

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**BACKGROUND  
INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ITEM TITLE:** Formation of a Calendar Task Force  
**DATE:**  
**ITEM TYPE:**  
**ITEM SUMMARY:**  
**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**  
**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ITEM TITLE:** Approval of a one time donation of \$1,500 to the Natick Robotics Club from Greg Rich of Vivantio, Inc.

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND**

**INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Type</b>
Donation from Vivantio for Natick Robotics Club	vivantio_donation_for_approval_2.5_mtg_.pdf	Cover Memo



Lisa Spencer  
15 West Street  
Natick, MA 01760

January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Re: Robotics Team Donation**

Dear Lisa,

I was recently contacted by the Lightning Hawks robotics team seeking funding to help support their effort in procuring parts and computers to participate in local and national competitions.

Enclosed is a check for a one-time donation of \$1500.00 for the team to use in procuring parts/conducting marketing, or for any other use. Please can you ensure the RoboNatick team receives this donation.

If I can also request that a receipt or relevant paperwork be sent to the below address or emailed to [accounts@vivantio.com](mailto:accounts@vivantio.com) for tax purposes, I'd be very grateful.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Rich', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Greg Rich  
CEO



Vivantio, Inc.  
2 Woodcock Path  
Natick, MA 01760-5558  
accounts@vivantio.com

DATE 19-01-2024 1-2/210

PAY  
TO THE  
ORDER OF

ROBO NATICK

\$ 1500.00

ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND  $\frac{0}{100}$

DOLLARS

**CHASE**

JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A.  
www.Chase.com

FOR

NATICK ROBOTICS CLUB

*[Signature]*

⑈005415⑈ ⑆021000021⑆

591839219⑈

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**ITEM TITLE:** Approval of a donation of \$1,000 to the Natick Robotics Club from Andrew Blanchard of Teradyne, Inc.

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND**

**INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

---

**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Type</b>
Donation from Teradyne for Natick Robotics Club	teradyne_donation_for_2.5_mtg.pdf	Cover Memo

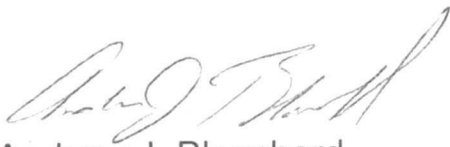
January 19, 2024

Mr. Ray Salemi  
Natick High School  
15 West Street  
Natick, MA 01760

Dear Mr. Salemi,

We recently received a request from Ryan Eigenmann, a Natick High School student with a request for support of RobotNaticks' Team 6032 Lightning Hawks. Teradyne is pleased to support the team with a \$1,000 grant. Your program aligns well with Teradyne and our employees' view that strong technical education, especially when it includes real world projects like the robotics competition, provides the foundation for long term professional, business and community success.

Best wishes in this year's competition



Andrew J. Blanchard  
Vice President, Corporate Relations  
Teradyne Inc  
600 Riverpark Drive  
North Reading, MA 01864

TERADYNE INC  
600 RIVERPARK DRIVE NR7002-2  
NORTH READING, MA 01864

TERADYNE

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Check No. 1236409  
Check Date 01/19/2024  
Check Amount \$1,000.00



OD-000003 0001 0001 000005

NATICK HIGH SCHOOL  
15 WEST STREET  
NATICK, MA 01760

Invoice  
Number

Invoice  
Date  
01/17/2024

Description

Net  
Amount  
\$1,000.00

011724

TOTAL

\$1,000.00

Page 1 of 1

PLEASE FOLD ON PERFORATION AND DETACH HERE

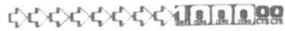
VERIFY THE AUTHENTICITY OF THIS MULTI-TONE SECURITY DOCUMENT.

CHECK BACKGROUND AREA CHANGES COLOR GRADUALLY FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

TERADYNE INC  
600 RIVERPARK DRIVE NR7002-2  
NORTH READING, MA 01864

TERADYNE

1236409  
January 19, 2024  
52-153/112 ME



Amount: \*\*One Thousand dollars and 00 cents\*\*

\*\*\$1,000.00\*\*

Pay to the order of NATICK HIGH SCHOOL

Bank of America N.A.  
South Portland, ME

MR RAY SALEMI

Teradyne

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

0001236409 011201539 000080062403

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**ITEM TITLE:** Approval of a donation of \$300 to the Chinese Culture Club from Sunrise Montessori, Inc.

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

Description	File Name	Type
approval of a donation of \$300 to the Chinese Culture Club from Sunrise Montessori, Inc	2.5_donations.pdf	Cover Memo

1389

5-13/110

## Sunrise Montessori Inc.

181 N. Main Street  
Natick, MA 01760DATE 1/17/2024PAY TO THE ORDER OF Chinese Culture Club \$ 300.00Three Hundred and 00/100 DOLLARS  
BANK OF AMERICAFOR Chinese New Year Event Sponsorship

⑈001389⑈ ⑆011000138⑆ 004666831622⑈

Club  
Deposit  
HS Student Activity

## Sun Tree Early Education, LLC

DBA The Goddard School

141 Linden St  
Wellesley, MA 02482

160

5-7017/2110

DATE 1/15/24PAY TO THE ORDER OF Chinese Culture Club \$ 600.00Six hundred DOLLARS  
Citizens BankFOR Gold package

⑈000160⑈ ⑆211070175⑆ 1408124774⑈

18 Beacon St →  
Natick MA 01760JESSICA L ALLAIN  
The Allain GroupDate Jan. 18, 2024

222

53-7122/2113

CHECK ARMOR

Pay to the Order of Natick High School Chinese Culture Club \$ 300.00Three hundred and xx/xx DollarsMiddlesex  
Savings Bank

NATICK, MA 01760

For Lunar New YearAn Oh

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**ITEM TITLE:** Approval of a donation of \$600 to the Chinese Culture Club from Sun Tree Early Education, LLC

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

Description	File Name	Type
approval of a donation of \$600 to the Chinese Culture Club from Sn Tree Early Education LLC	2.5_donations.pdf	Cover Memo

1389

5-13/110

## Sunrise Montessori Inc.

181 N. Main Street  
Natick, MA 01760DATE 1/17/2024PAY TO THE ORDER OF Chinese Culture Club \$ 300.00Three Hundred and 00/100 DOLLARS  
BANK OF AMERICAFOR Chinese New Year Event Sponsorship

⑈001389⑈ ⑆011000138⑆ 004666831622⑈

Club  
Deposit  
HS Student Activity

## Sun Tree Early Education, LLC

DBA The Goddard School

141 Linden St  
Wellesley, MA 02482

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5-7017/2110

DATE 1/15/24PAY TO THE ORDER OF Chinese Culture Club \$ 600.00Six hundred DOLLARS  
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⑈000160⑈ ⑆211070175⑆ 1408124774⑈

18 Beacon St →  
Natick MA 01760JESSICA L ALLAIN  
The Allain GroupDate Jan. 18, 2024

222

53-7122/2113

CHECK ARMOR

Pay to the Order of Natick High School Chinese Culture Club \$ 300.00Three hundred and xx/xx DollarsMiddlesex  
Savings Bank

NATICK, MA 01760

For Lunar New YearAn Oh



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**ITEM TITLE:** Approval of a donation of \$300 to the Chinese Culture Club from Jessica Allain

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

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**INFORMATION:**

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Type</b>
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5-13/110

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5-7017/2110

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18 Beacon St →  
Natick MA 01760JESSICA L ALLAIN  
The Allain GroupDate Jan. 18, 2024

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53-7122/2113

CHECK ARMOR

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Savings Bank

NATICK, MA 01760

For Lunar New YearAn Oh

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**ITEM TITLE:** Approval of School Committee Open Session Minutes Dated 11.6, 11.20, 12.4 and 12.18.23

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Type</b>
11.6 school committee open session minutes	11.6.23_School_Committee_OPEN_SESSION_Minutes.pdf	Cover Memo
11.20 school committee open session minutes	11.20.23_School_Committee_OPEN_SESSION_Minutes.pdf	Cover Memo
12.4 school committee open session minutes	12.4.23_School_Committee_OPEN_SESSION_Minutes.pdf	Cover Memo
12.18 school committee open session minutes	12.18.23_School_Committee_Meeting_OPEN_SESSION_Minutes.pdf	Cover Memo

*Natick Public Schools*  
***SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES***  
*November 6, 2023*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday November 6, 2023, at 6:00 pm via an in-person and virtual meeting. Chair Fuxman called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:00 pm.

Dr. Shai Fuxman – present  
Ms. Elise Gorseth – present  
Ms. Julie McDonough – present  
Ms. Cathi Collins – present  
Mr. Matthew Brand – present  
Ms. Catherine Brunell – *not present arrived at 6:04*  
Ms. Kate Flathers - present

Others Present:	Ms. Bella Wong	Interim Superintendent
	Mr. Tim Luff	Deputy Superintendent
	Ms. Sue Balboni	Asst. Superintendent for Teaching, Learning & Innovation
	Mr. Matthew Gillis	Asst. Superintendent for Finance
	Ms. Linda McGrath	Recording Secretary
	Mr. William Spratt	Facilities Director

Chair Fuxman motion to move into Executive Session at 6:02 - Mr. Brand second the motion.

To Conduct Strategy Sessions in Preparation for negotiations with non-represented personnel (Director of Technology)

To discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto.

To discuss complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual (open meeting law complaints dated 10/23/23 and 10/26/23 filed by Ms. Karin Glanville ) in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Chair Fuxman took roll call:

Dr. Shai Fuxman – present  
Ms. Elise Gorseth – present  
Ms. Julie McDonough – present  
Ms. Cathi Collins – present  
Mr. Matthew Brand – present  
Ms. Kate Flathers - present

Motion passed 6-0-0

Chair Fuxman reopened the meeting at 6:50 PM and stated that the meeting is being recorded for future viewing.

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Moment of Silence - A moment to honor those who have sacrificed for freedom.
- Announcements

Chair Fuxman mentioned that it is Veterans Day this weekend and that there is an event by the Veterans Affairs Office taking place in the common starting at 9:30 am and to visit the website for more information.

In regards to the Superintendent Search - Mr. Brand and Ms. Balboni mentioned that there is a survey for the Focus Groups that was sent out to see what characteristics everyone was looking for in a Superintendent. The survey will close on November 14th at midnight.

Ms. Brunell commented on the METCO retreat that she attended with Superintendent Wong, Mr. Fergusson and Ms. Clayton and how pleased she was with the focus on integration.

Chair Fuxman noted that the recognition of Students Receiving the MASS Superintendent's Award will be presented at the next meeting on November 20th.

#### PUBLIC SPEAK

1. Rabbi Ken Richmond - Talked about welcoming all persons regardless of how they look, love, and abilities. He speaks tonight to have his voice counted and appreciates all the natick schools have done so that everyone can feel welcomed and comfortable.
2. James Roberts - Wanted to address Mr. Wood's statement from the last School Committee meeting regarding parents comments towards teachers.
3. Cory Spaulding - Talked about her daughter being disabled and a residency investigation.

#### TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE - Jefferson Wood

Mr. Wood read a letter to the community that he wrote and posted to the "Contact us Link" on the "Parental Rights Natick" website. Mr. Wood said he is still willing to engage but not sure how to? He wanted to clarify his concerns. Mr. Wood talked about what is taught in class for High School, Middle School and the Elementary Schools and how it could be misconstrued. Mr. Wood asked for any parent whose child is a Natick Public School student, to reach out to a teacher with any concerns they may have about content that is taught.

#### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE - Inkyoung Lee

Inkyoung mentioned that the High School finished first term this week and has moved on to term 2. She also mentioned that this past Saturday, the band, orchestra, and choir students went to a regional music audition where a number of students were accepted and a number of students received all state recommendations. Student Council food drive that runs through the end of November.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. Proposed FY25 Capital
2. FY 24 Class Size Enrollment Updates
3. FY25 Enrollment Projection
4. School Improvement Plans

### Proposed FY25 Capital

Mr. Gillis provided a list (with the help from Mr. Spratt and Mr. Roche) from feedback regarding the capital plan.

1. Field replacement - Replacing the grass with turf
2. Parking fee (High School) - Reconstruction of lot across the street from the stadium. Further down the road - seal coating and line striping.
3. School furniture - Looking to replace furniture at several schools where the furniture is failing.
4. Deferred maintenance - Lists being put together from all the schools as what they are looking to have taken care of and will work with the Town Facilities Department to get the items done. There are bigger items such as HVAC and roofs but the budget is limited. Focusing most on the Elementary Schools.
5. MSBA - 2,000,000 for the feasibility study.

Mr. Spratt talked about the presentation from last spring about the playgrounds being sort of split between parks and rec, schools and DPW. There needs to be a discussion for an ownership plan so everyone is on the same page. Down the road there should be a study done since the last one was in 2016.

As far as the roofs are concerned, looking at the stewardship plan, the next schools that are in need are Wilson and Ben/Hem. Currently there are solar panels on those roofs so waiting for those contracts to expire. As for the windows, the East School is already funded to have theirs done in the spring. The next school for windows would be Memorial School which is later on in the capital plan.

Mr. Spratt talked about space renewal which is the interior updates for all school buildings. Some schools that are highlighted are the Wilson School whose flooring is coming to the end of its life cycle and the High School has some exterior painting that is coming off of its life cycle.

The security plan regarding HVAC, the Lilja and Brown schools are nearing the end of life cycle and discussing designs at the moment while working with Jillian Wilson-Martin for sustainability. The \$2,000,000 grant for the Wilson and Ben/Hem schools are near term for HVAC.

The exterior envelope; brick work, chalking, repointing, etc... and will be spread out for the schools that are coming off of their life cycle.

Mr. Gillis commented that items such as networks, classroom audio, firewalls, routers, back-up servers are coming to the end of their life cycle and Mr. Roche recommended not waiting on replacing.

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Superintendent Wong reminded everyone that there are two meetings being held so the latest that can be voted on is at the next meeting and would allow for additional questions.

Ms. Brunell questioned if there was an item more eminent, would that be something that can be discussed such as the playgrounds being done sooner than 2026? Mr. Gillis talked about the price range in nearby playgrounds being about \$220,000 - \$230,000. Mr. Spratt explained the reason for it being pushed out till 2026 was to establish who is responsible for the playgrounds and with the life expectancy being around 25 to 30 years, they assume they had time.

Ms. Collins expressed concern about the 5 year capital plan being filed as a 5 year plan and not a 1 year plan because of dates that changed. She also stated that dates and amounts could change. Superintendent Wong said that it would be filed as a 5 year plan.

Ms. McDonough asked Mr. Spratt if it would be realistic that the items in each year's total at the bottom of the spreadsheet will be funded in the year that is on the spreadsheet? Mr. Spratt couldn't give a definitive answer but explained that they have been proceeding this way for 2 years (facilities specifically) and that the Board and FinCom like the planning documents.

Superintendent Wong stated that the purpose is to see the support of the School Committee of the items on the spreadsheet which is requested on behalf of the schools.

Mr. Gillis stated what was communicated to him from the Town Administration and the School Committee of what our needs are over the past few years, and placed all of that on one spreadsheet.

Superintendent Wong stated that the items on the spreadsheet have been identified to request on behalf of the School Department and are looking for the School Committee endorsement.

Superintendent Wong commented that submission is due by the end of this month for all departments.

Ms. Flathers questioned what "Long Term" means in the Long Term Capital Plan in Enrollment Study? Mr. Gillis stated that MSBA wants to see a comprehensive plan and that the long term usually goes out about 10 to 15 years. He also talked about the feasibility study for Memorial.

Ms. Flathers talked about the field design and more information about the use of the fields. Mr. Gillis stated that the Athletic Director can give a better idea of how often they are used.

Superintendent Wong commented that the School Department files an SOI for the Memorial School and with the high demand for money for the fields, they will look for a robust enrollment.

Ms. McDonough asked if there is money for modules? Mr. Spratt said that is out on a further Capital Plan for about \$1,000,000.00.

Ms. McDonough also asked about possible resourcing the tennis courts at the high school? Mr. Spratt said he wasn't aware at this time.

Chair Fuxman mentioned the goals set for the year by the School Committee and is interested in partnering with everyone to help.

Ms. Collins asked if the MSBA change their rule about the enrollment study if accepted into their program? Superintendent Wong said that usually you have to have the enrollment study done as it's part of the rationale of the building project.

## 2. School Improvement Plans

Superintendent Wong introduced the Principals that are participating in the meeting tonight:

Aidan McCann - Principal of The Brown School  
Dr. Shelby Marscher - Principal of the Lilja School  
Brenna Turner - Principal of The Johnson School  
Karen Ghilani - Principal of the Ben/Hem School  
Marybeth Kincaide - Principal of the PreSchool

Mr. McCann stated that they provided the School Improvement Plan document ahead and would be happy to take any questions.

Ms. Collins asked the Principals if they were comfortable with what is in the plan. All the Principals said "yes".

Ms. Balboni mentioned that during the summer retreat with AD Council, they were asked their top three priorities and these are what is on the plan being presented.

Ms. Brunell stated that she appreciated the emphasis on the EL population and that the L-pack has disbanded. Mr. McCann said that there is conversation about re-establishing the L-pack group and Mr. Luff also commented that Ms. Miller is working hard as well to re-establish the L-pack.

Ms. Brunell commented about the coaches and how excellent they were in their presentation at Ben/Hem and wondered if in the coaching cycle, we will use external resources for the teachers. Ms. Ghilani said "yes" with Professional Development days.

Ms. Balboni said there is a line in the budget for such Professional Development days and it is robust.

Ms. Brunell mentioned peer mediation where at the high school there is an emphasis, and wondered if there could be more and have it start in the lower grades?

Dr. Marscher stated that the Principals have been looking into better using restorative practices and one of those practices is restorative circles. This is an adult scaffolded mediation style tool that can be used to help the students use their own agencies in problem solving.

Ms. McDonough asked about the goal regarding coaching and what coaches does it refer to? Mr. McCann said it refers to the literacy coaches, math coaches, and personalized learning coaches. Ms. McDonough then questioned the personalized learning coaches and Superintendent Wong stated that they are in the budget for this year. Ms. Balboni said that they are a combination of digital technology in the classroom as well as personalized learning and work across all the schools.

Ms. Flathers asked if they are grant funded positions and Ms. Balboni said they were not and they are brand new this year.



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Chair Fuxman asked about the new curriculum, how it is going, and how can the School Committee help? Ms. Ghilani stated that it was a lot of work in the beginning but believes it will have a great return.

Both Superintendent Wong and Chair Fuxman thanked the Principals for coming to tonight's meeting and then welcomed the following Principals for questions: Ms. Teresa Carney, Ms. Josepha Blocker, and Ms. Jodi Cohen.

Ms. Brunell asked about goal 3 and said she was concerned about the lack of activities for the 5th graders. Ms. Carney stated that all of the clubs that they offer are open to the 5th graders with the exception of peer leadership. And that there are a few clubs that are specifically geared towards the 5th grades since they created them themselves. She also stated that there are about 20 clubs offered between the two middle schools.

Ms. Cohen mentioned the library and that it's more of a learning commons where there are a lot of 5th graders.

Ms. McDonough questioned goal 1 regarding RTI and asked if it was new this year and how students are assigned? Ms. Carney said that it wasn't necessarily new but that they have more offerings. She then talked about the gifted and talented and if students qualify, they have options to take online courses.

Ms. McDonough also asked about the data used? Ms. Carney said students are assessed four times a year for math and reading using renaissance. She stated that the students are looking for more choices in the enrichment courses.

Ms. Cohen added that the Kennedy School was able to do some enrichment with world language for the first time.

Ms. Carney also mentioned that they are also looking at teaching life skills for students.

Ms. Gorseth wanted to thank the principals for the 8th grade RTI enrichment program. She then questioned the two middle schools in regards to the clubs and activities and wondered if there is a need at one school more than another? Ms. Carney mentioned that with clubs and activities, there are not always staff members that have the skills to teach the activities.

Ms. Flathers asked if the Principals feel like they are further ahead in regards to the math curriculum? Ms. Cohen stated that the staff felt very solid about the math curriculum. Ms. Carney mentioned that after piloting the "Big Ideas" program, the teachers were happier and Ms. Balboni agreed.

Ms. McDonough wanted to complement the last part of the plan that focused on the staff wellbeing.

Superintendent Wong said that the principals should be proud of what they presented tonight.

Chair Fuxman wanted to comment that he was impressed with the SEL goal for the middle schools and high school.

Ms. McDonough commented to Ms. Blocker, that she appreciates the clarity of the plan especially with the first goal. She then asked about the inclusive academy and wondered if it was a part of the personalized learning coaches? Ms. Blocker said that the coaches are participating in it but that it is a grant that Ms. Balboni applied for and the high school is benefiting from. Ms. McDonough asked who is the High School Vice Principal for teaching and learning and Ms. Blocker said that it is Dr. Cole Harms.

Ms. Collins commented that she appreciates the clarity and specificity of the goals.

Ms. Flathers commented on goal 2 and the math curriculum that the high school adopted. Ms. Blocker stated that, like the middle schools, the teachers are excited about the "Big Ideas" program and where it is headed.

Ms. Brunell mentioned that there was a wonderful connection between the goal and what she heard at the latest METCO conference. Also, the director of METCO commented how important it was that METCO was included in the data teams.

Ms. Gorseth made a motion to approve the School Improvement Plans for the Elementary, Middle and the High School. Ms. Collins seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman asked all those in favor of the vote: All approved 7-0-0

Superintendent Wong wanted to express her thoughts in regards to the school improvement plans. She stated that it usually takes about 8 to 10 years for initial plans to gel and that we are seeing the realization of that now, especially being shortly after COVID. Superintendent Wong stated she would not be surprised to see positive results coming and that the schools are very welcoming and caring.

### 3. FY24 Class Size Enrollment Updates

Ms. McDonough asked the middle and high school principals if they had any concerns regarding the class sizes? Ms. Carney stated that Wilson is currently at about 750 students and that Kennedy is a little over 900. Thought that Wilson will be down sizing and possibly shifting staff over to Kennedy. Ms. Cohen stated that Kennedy is growing larger and is in need of another Special Education teacher as well as another PE teacher. Ms. McDonough asked if expanding the mini teams would help with class size? Ms. Cohen said yes with space. Currently there are mini teams at each grade level.

Ms. McDonough questioned the High school's class size stating that English had been able to maintain a low level but some of the Math and Language have increased slightly. Ms. Blocker mentioned that they started the honor classes a little higher as there are usually students that will drop down. Ms. Blocker did mention that the Science classes for labs are larger than she likes and is concerned about OSHA regulations. She stated that she was going to speak with the head of the Science Department in regards to that.

### 4. FY25 Enrollment Projection

Mr. Gillis talked about the enrollment projections from the spreadsheet provided, one based on 3 years and one based on 5 years. - [FY Enrollment Projections](#)

Mr. Gillis said as a member of NESDEC and DESE we can get an update for projections.

Mr. Brunell asked about the Brown and Johnson schools for next year.

Superintendent Wong talked about the Johnson School and the grades that will need to be split between the Brown and Memorial Schools. She stated that the numbers worked out and we will not need any additional sections at either schools. Superintendent Wong said that they will be meeting with staff individually to see where they would like to go.

Ms. Flathers asked where does that put class size at since they will not need any additional sections? Both Superintendent Wong and Ms. Balboni did not have the exact numbers on hand but that they were not numbers to be concerned about.

Ms. Gorseth asked whether the 3 year average model enrollment projection was accurate, and wondered if it would need to be tweaked each year when the actual numbers come out? Mr. Gillis said you need to look at all the factors before settling. Superintendent Wong commented that the pandemic and mortgages have made an impact.

Ms. Collins thanked Mr. Gillis for proving the enrollment projections. Mr. Gillis talked about other factors that might play in such as other schools, school choice, etc. Ms. Collins also thanked the principals and for them to advocate for what they need while moving forward through budget season. Mr. Gillis said they would have to look at options for space. Maybe moving pre-K and using that space but there is not a quick answer.

Ms. Flathers asked the population size the High School was built for that included pre-K? Mr. Luff thought it was around 1650 students but would need to check.

Ms. McDonough asked if we could devise a plan now to accommodate the 1708 students for FY26? Mr. Gillis suggested the first thing to do is to see what the building was designed for and then talk with the principal.

Chair Fuxman asked how the projections impact MSBA? Mr. Gillis said that out of the 8 categories that need to be checked off, enrollment and overcrowding are one of the items that helps move it along.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve to retire Technology Assets

Ms. Collins moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Brand second the motion.

Chair Fuxman asked all those in favor of the vote: All approved 7-0-0

#### ACTION ITEMS

1. Approve Charity/Fundraising Group Process - move to the 11.20 mtg
2. Approve School Improvement Plans - Chair Fuxman asked all those in favor of the vote: All approved 7-0-0

Chair Fuxman mentioned that we are moving the action item 1. Approve Charity/Fundraising Group Process to the November 20, 2023 meeting.

#### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

1. Superintendent Search

Ms. Brunell went over the [timeline](#) for the Superintendent search. She mentioned that they are doing an aggressive search with a possible recommendation of final candidates by mid January. She then discussed the Focus Group schedule and stated that this and the survey are used to create the candidate profile.

Mr. Brand questioned if we should put on the schedule a tentative additional Focus Group for early next week, one for the community and one for parents. This would be contingent upon getting enough people to make it an efficient

## *Approval of Minutes*

group and would most likely be through Zoom but open to either. If there is an additional group scheduled, this would push the close of the survey to the 15th. Ms. Balboni mentioned that the numbers have significantly dropped for people to sign up.

Ms. Collins suggested adding two more Focus Groups in order to give parents of future students an opportunity to participate.

Ms. Balboni mentioned that NESDEC has not seen in other searches a big turnout from community members in the past.

Ms. McDonough stated that she didn't think adding more groups would make much of a difference. But if we felt the need to add then maybe just one.

Ms. Gorseth asked with the two parent groups if there was an overlap where someone might have signed up for two? Ms. Balboni said she hadn't seen any overlap in any of the groups.

Ms. Brunell mentioned that NESDEC is able to see if people are signing up for multiple groups.

Mr. Brand wanted to summarize that the Focus Group and survey are intended to be a guideline for a profile and that the data is not choosing the finalist.

Ms. Brunell and Mr. Brand mentioned that based on the numbers, would we like to provide the community another opportunity to have another Focus Group?

There was concern about having the meeting on November 14th as there is a Town meeting at 7:30 pm.

Chair Fuxman made a motion to add a Focus Group that would take place no later than November 14th. Since it was in the original guidelines of being able to have up to 10 Focus Groups, the School Committee members had an informal vote and all were in favor 7-0-0.

Ms. Collins asked if the beginning questions in the Focus Groups are the same questions in the survey? Ms. Balboni said that the 3 of the questions in the Focus Group were: What are the characteristics, what type of experience and what are the priorities. She then went on to say that in the survey, you can select what is most important to you as well as open response questions.

Mr. Brand went over updates - the profile will be presented at the December 4th meeting. Also, if there is any School Committee member who thought of a possible candidate for the Superintendent position, to reach out to Ms. Diaz at NESDEC.

The Screening Committee update - The memo that is in Novus that was sent out to various stakeholder groups, the deadline is December 1st as to who their representative will be. The only one that has reached out as of today is Jamie Errickson who has decided to join the Screening Committee. The first meeting will be held on December 14th. The ultimate goal is to have a diverse group of people that have experience.

Ms. Balboni said that the EAN will be voting at the end of the month as to who their 3 representatives will be.

Ms. Collins asked if there is any member of the community that shows interest in participating should they reach? Mr. Brand suggested that they wait till it is announced what the process will be.

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Ms. Flathers questioned if the community members At-Large, METCO, SPEC and PPC if we were coming back to discuss what the process would be like? Mr. Brand said his understanding was that the two School Committee members that would be on the Screening Committee would be making that decision. Ms. Brunell thought that it would be delegated to the individual groups to make that decision and that the School Committee did not have to vote on it.

Ms. Flathers stated that her preference for the community member At-Large should come before the School Committee as to what the process should be. Mr. Brand said that part of the reason they have not made a decision yet is because they haven't heard from the other groups.

Ms. Gorseth questioned if the community member At-Large has to be a retired member? Mr. Brand said "yes".

Ms. McDonough reiterated the original motion that discussed how the committee would be selected.

Mr. Collins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 pm. Mr. Brand seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman asked all in favor -

Dr. Shai Fuxman – yes  
Ms. Elise Gorseth – yes  
Ms. Julie McDonough – yes  
Ms. Cathi Collins – yes  
Mr. Matthew Brand – yes  
Ms. Catherine Brunell – yes  
Ms. Kate Flathers - yes

Motion passed - 7-0-0

Respectfully submitted by:

Linda McGrath - Recording Secretary

*Natick Public Schools*  
***SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES***  
*November 20, 2023*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday November 20, 2023, at 6:30 pm via an in-person and virtual meeting. Chair Fuxman called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:30 pm.

Members Present:

Dr. Shai Fuxman - present  
Elise Gorseth - present @ 6:31  
Cathi Collins - present  
Catherine Brunell - present  
Kate Flathers - present  
Julie McDonough – present  
Matt Brand – present

Others Present:

Dr. Bella Wong	Interim Superintendent
Tim Luff	Deputy Superintendent
Susan Balboni	Asst. Superintendent for Teaching, Learning & Innovation
Matthew Gillis	Asst. Superintendent of Finance
Linda McGrath	Recording Secretary
Jefferson Wood	Teacher Representative
Inkyoung Lee (virtual)	Student Representative

**OPEN SESSION**

**Roll Call**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Moment of Silence** - To honor those who fought for our country.

**Announcements** – Recognition of Students Receiving the MASS Superintendent Award

Superintendent Wong presented the awards to the following students along with reading a statement from their counselors.

Addison Scully  
Ryan Weierman

## *Approval of Minutes*

Mr. Brand announced and congratulated the Natick High Varsity girls soccer team on their State Championship win for the second time in three years

### PUBLIC SPEAK

Public Speak is scheduled for a period of fifteen minutes. Each speaker will be permitted a maximum of three minutes during which time they can speak about topics within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. All remarks will be addressed through the School Committee Chair. Public Speak is not a time for debate or response to comments by the School Committee.

1. Rebecca Salomon - Rebecca is a 7th grade student at the Wilson School and talked about diversity, LGBTQ+, and racial equality being a collective issue in the community. Rebecca stated that she stands by her classmates' right to dignity and respect.
2. Maxwell Klau - Started by saying that today, November 20th, is transgender remembrance day. Talked as a parent who cares deeply about the education in the Natick Public Schools and wanting to make sure that all students feel loved and welcomed.

### TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE - Jefferson Wood

Started by saying last week was American Education week and talked about bigger and broader concerns that happen in the classrooms. Mr. Wood talked about devastations in history such as 9/11, Columbine shootings, as well as other school shootings, Black Lives Matter, and the attack on the Capitol.

### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE - Inkyoung Lee (virtual)

NHS food drive is going until this Wednesday, November 22nd and more donations will be needed to reach the 5,000 item goal. Inkyoun said that the Natick High's girls soccer team won the DIV 1 championship.

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

#### 1. Superintendent Search Update

Ms. Brunell stated that they have just finished the Focus Groups and surveys and the district will be receiving applications from the applicants until December 7th, 2023. She said that the Screening Committee will begin the first round of interviews at the beginning of January and by the middle of January, the finalists will be announced. Ms. Brunell also thanked Ms. Balboni and the NESDEC consultants for handling the Focus Groups.

Ms. Balboni stated that the survey produced over 580 responses and 72% of those responses were parents.

Mr. Brand said the deadline is December 1st for receiving the representatives from the different groups. The Screening Committee currently has 8 members out of 13 which are: Mr. Brand and Ms. Brunell represents the School Committee members, METCO but waiting on confirmation, PPC representative is Carie Lynn Carnahan,

## *Approval of Minutes*

Principal representative is Aidan McCann from the Brown School, Central Office representative is Sue Balboni, and for the Community At-Large is Nandini Bajpai. He said we are right on schedule and by December 4th we should have the candidate profile from NESDEC.

Ms. Gorseth asked how the questions in the survey were selected? Mr. Brand said the questions came from NESDEC and are standard questions. The School Committee does not create the questions.

Ms. McDonough asked if we would have the summary report from the survey and the Focus Groups on the December 4th meeting? Ms. Brunell said that we would and perhaps before the December meeting.

Ms. Collins asked how to go about getting raw data? Ms. Brunell said to contact the NESDEC representatives.

### CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve High School Robotics Tools as Surplus: Metal Press; Drill Press; Band Saw (now being used)
2. Approve Field Trip to Providence RI for High School Choir
3. Approve Field Trip to NE Technical Institute in RI
4. Approve Field Trip to Spain for April 2025

Chair Fuxman asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Luff said he was notified that the first item (High School Robotics Tools as Surplus: Metal Press; Drill Press; Band Saw) on the Consent Agenda had changed so we would need a motion to pull the item from the agenda.

Ms. Collins made a motion to pull out the High School Robotics Tools as Surplus: Metal Press; Drill Press; Band Saw.

Chair Fuxman asked for a motion to approve the remainder of the Consent Agenda.

Ms. McDonough made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda without the first item. Mr. Brand second the motion.

All in favor 7-0-0

Mr. Luff said he was notified by Mr. Galvin that the bandsaw that was one of three considered as surplus is now being used by the Facilities Department. Mr. Luff then asked for an approval for the High School Robotics Tools as surplus for the Metal Press and Drill Press.

Ms. Collins made a motion to approve and Mr. Brand seconded the motion.

All in favor 7-0-0

### SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISONS UPDATES

1. Policy Subcommittee

Review Draft Policies for First Reading: JIC - Student Discipline; JK - Student Conduct; IMGA - Service Animals in Schools; IMG - Animals in Schools; KBE - Relations with Parents/Booster Organizations



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Mr. Brand said that the Policy Subcommittee held a meeting on Thursday, November 16th and reviewed 5 policies that are in need of updating with the recommendation of MASC. These are only a first reading so they will not be approved tonight.

Mr. Luff went over each of the policies and changes that were made. The first two policies had different codes so a switch was made. The next two policies that talk about animals in schools. MASC has decided to separate the two policies; one for animals in schools and the other for service animals in schools. The last policy is currently in two policies but MASC has them combined as one.

Ms. Flathers asked if they are coming in as a new policy? Mr. Luff said they are coming in for a first read as a new policy but some of the codes have been changed.

Chair Fuxman asked about the policy for animals on school property. Does that include after school hours?

Mr. Brand stated that they need to go over this policy more but thought the policy would be in effect during school hours which include any activities. The policy would not so much be in effect on the weekend if people should be walking their animals on school grounds. The original policy discussed more on the lines of animals in the building.

Ms. Brunell questioned the language of the MASC policy saying that no animal should be brought to school without prior permission from the Principal and wondered if we are making our language more specific? Mr. Luff and Mr. Brand stated that they were adjusting the language a bit. Ms. Brunell also questioned how it would impact the Principal's job?

Ms. Collins stated that it was okay to walk past the school such as walking your dog but not on school property where then Principals would have to ask them to please not bring your animal on school grounds.

Mr. Luff stated that Principals have reached out in the past with concerns about animals coming into the schools and what they could do about it?

Ms. Gorseth asked if the policy regarding service animals includes therapy animals? Mr. Luff said that therapeutic animals are not considered service animals. The therapeutic animals would be under the first policy where they need to receive the Principal's permission. Ms. Gorseth suggested maybe consulting with someone with disabilities and who has a service animal to see if this would fit with the user experience.

Ms. McDonough questioned the therapy dog that was gifted to the High School and does the district pay for the dog?

Mr. Gillis stated that the Librarian of the High School takes care of the dog that was gifted and that a variety of student activity groups give donations to help support "Sassy". He said he didn't believe that the district has paid for the animal from what he has seen so far.

Mr. Luff said that there is another therapy dog at Kennedy and that the district does not fund or pay for the animal.

Ms. McDonough questioned if a student was uncomfortable with the dog, what would be the process? Ms. Balboni said the dog stays behind the Librarian's desk and only comes out with the Librarian after she checks with the students to see if they are okay with that. And the same goes for the dog at Lilja.

Ms. Brunell stated that there is a benefit to having the dogs in the schools for students that would like to be able to interact with the animal if they wanted to.

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Chair Fuxman added that there is research that shows having therapy dogs in school increases reading and language skills, social and emotional gain, and improves gross motor skills.

Mr. Wood questioned when there is a policy change, are there elements that can be “grandfathered in”? Mr. Luff stated that the current policy is much more restrictive which prohibits animals in schools altogether but that the new policy is less restrictive.

Chair Fuxman said that we will visit and vote on these policies at the next meeting.

### SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

1. METCO Transportation Request
2. FY24 1st Quarter Financial Report
3. FY24 Budget Transfer Request
4. Reorganization of Technology Staff
5. Five Year Capital Summary

Superintendent Wong talked about an invitation she received from Senator Karen Spilka to attend the State House today. Superintendent Wong was in company with other Superintendents from surrounding districts and they were allowed to share good things as well as challenges that were happening in the district. One topic was the impact of the pandemic and not being able to fill all positions. Also talked about collective bargaining challenges that are happening in the State.

1. METCO Transportation Request - Rasheeda Clayton

Mr. Luff reviewed the current transportation that we have, which is one large yellow bus that transports both middle and High School students, one elementary van that was added this year that transports kindergarten and 3 students that go to Ben/Hem, and two vans that transport students with disabilities.

Ms. Clayton talked about the expansion of the METCO 2.0 program and the adding of a second bus. She stated that it was approved by the School Committee last year to expand the METCO program to the elementary level. They were able to place two students in 3rd grade and 2 students in Kindergarten.

Ms. Clayton went over the reasons for advocating for a second bus:

1. The Wilson Middle School students will gain 15 minutes in the morning.
2. There will be cohort stops which will be reduced from 9 to 7 and an additional bus will further reduce the number of stops from 7 to 6 for both schools.
3. The students at Wilson Middle and the High School will be able to stay after an additional day going from 3 days a week to 4 days. The additional bus will act as a late bus so students can stay for after school activities.

Ms. Clayton stated that there are currently 4 students at Ben/Hem but next year there will be 9 students which will have reached capacity to use vans. If the METCO program is granted an expansion from DESE, it will limit the options if a second bus is not available.

Ms. Clayton went over the 5 commitments for the METCO 2.0 program which are:

## *Approval of Minutes*

1. Structures, rules, and cross functional teams.
2. Building a 2.0 personal and team culture.
3. Systematic, equity focused and improvement process.
4. Public engagement.
5. Fiscal commitment.

Tonight's discussion relates to both commitment 3 (Systematic, equity focused and improvement process) and commitment 5 (Fiscal commitment).

Mr. Luff mentioned that there were a couple of choices for tonight; one being a recommendation for an additional bus for this year and the other is an additional bus for next year while we try to expand our program.

Mr. Gillis discussed the [numbers for the METCO](#). The cost to add another bus for this year from January to June would be \$86,000.

Chair Fuxman asked to clarify what is being asked of the committee? To provide additional funding for another bus to run from January to June which would be \$86,000 and vote on it tonight?

Mr. Gillis stated the reason the cost is higher than usual is the route that it will be taking which is from Boston to Natick and back. Also, we are not dropping the van but adding another bus to make two buses and a van.

Ms. Collins questioned the \$26,000 figure? Mr. Gillis said originally we thought we would pay \$26,100 for the van but the actual cost was \$62,897 which is already contracted.

Ms. Brunell asked if we are able to pull the money from the operating budget for FY25? And would it be an increase in the operating budget for next year? Should we be talking about the bus for this year or talk long term? Mr. Gillis said it would reasonably appear that way, yes.

Chair Fuxman asked for a projection on how much we would have to pay for two buses and a van for next year? Mr. Gillis said probably around 10 to 12% more.

Superintendent Wong went over the expansion and what is expected.

Ms. Clayton stated that for next year, METCO will not need the van and that the additional bus will be for Kindergarten through 8th grade and that the cost would go down.

Mr. Brand asked how many students would be on the second bus? Ms. Clayton said there would be 18 students on one bus and 23 students on the second bus. The existing van will have 4 students.

Ms. Brunell asked if this was possible and Superintendent Wong said it was for FY24 and not sure if we can make the commitment for FY25.

Ms. McDonough expressed concerns about the METCO expansion when the budget had already been set. Not sure if we should approve the additional bus for this year but definitely for next year.

Ms. Collins asked if we were using the operating budget for a guidance salary?

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Ms. Clayton stated that the METCO grant supported a 1.0 guidance salary and one of the goals was to repurpose those funds to add an additional staff which they have. They now have a counselor at the High School and a counselor for both The Wilson Middle and the Ben/Hem elementary school.

Superintendent Wong suggested deferring the vote to the next meeting to wait on the supplemental budget.

Ms. Gorseth asked if another chart could be created with an additional column showing the FY25 projections.

Ms. Flathers asked if the elementary and middle students are using the same transportation, then the elementary would be starting early as well? Ms. Clayton said yes - about 15 to 20 minutes earlier. Ms. Flathers also asked if there are any other programs or stipends that support other means of transportation? Ms. Clayton said that they receive a pass that allows them to ride the commuter rail and MBTA for free.

Ms. Brunell asked if districts would share transportation? Ms. Clayton said that she has discussed that with DESE and METCO coordinators but the logistics would be hard to make it happen but not impossible. Would take a lot of effort.

Chair Fuxman asked if we don't make a decision for the additional but for the remainder of this year at the next meeting, will that be an issue to having the bus start in January?

Mr. Gillis said he would reach out to the bus company to see if they can start in January and if not, he will reach out to an alternate bus company.

Chair Fuxman also asked if Mr. Gillis would be able to project the cost for next year for just the two buses? Mr. Gillis said he could give him an estimate.

The School Committee decided not to vote but to table the decision till the next meeting. Chair Fuxman stated that there was no motion and that it will be tabled till the next meeting.

### 2. FY24 1st Quarter Financial Report

Mr. Gillis went over the [FY24 1st quarter financial report](#). He stated that the first quarter ended on September 30th, 2023 but was not finalized until the beginning of November. He said that after going over the line items, we were on target with the overall \$83.27 million dollar budget.

### 3. FY Budget Transfer Request

Mr. Gillis also went over the revolving funds. He stated that most of the revolving funds are good but there were a few that were in the red but not necessarily in the negative as we are waiting on revenue to post. He then talked about grants and said that we have closed out a fair number of prior year grants and many FY23 grants. Mr. Gillis did ask the School Committee if we could vote tonight so the Town Comptroller could revise the budget.

Ms. Collins asked if the DBJ policy (deciding when the School Committee needs to vote on a transfer) was taken into account? Mr. Gillis stated that if transfers are over \$5,000 then the School Committee should vote on the transfer. Mr. Luff read a paragraph in the DBJ policy which stated the policy doesn't say you can not it states that if it's greater than \$10,000 then the School Committee would have to vote.

Ms. Brunell suggested having a full overview of all the policies and applauds Mr. Gillis's budget that was presented.

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Ms. Flathers asked about the salary lines, what are all the positions and were they agreed upon? Mr. Gillis went over a few salary lines and stated that they were budgeted for less than what the actuals were. He stated that he was not here at that time but is trying to clean it up.

Mr. Luff stated that last year we had added a significant amount of positions that were grant funded over the operating fund but wasn't sure how many of those were shifted over to the right lines at the end of last year as we went through a transition.

Ms. McDonough made a motion to approve the general fund line item transfers as presented on November 20, 2023. Mr. Brand seconded the motion. All in favor 5, 1 abstention, 1 against. 5-1-1.

Ms. Brunell requested to have an update on chapter 70. It is her understanding that the district received more money than expected with chapter 70. Mr. Gillis said that the Town votes on a budget and chapter 70 is included but wasn't sure what the policy is for extra money?

### 4. Reorganization of Technology Staff

Superintendent Wong wanted to share that Dennis Roche has accepted the position of Chief Technology Officer. He remains a school employee but his contract has been amended so that he can offer services to support the Town which would be 60% school and 40% for the Town. The new contract is for three years and Dennis is currently in his second year of his six year contract. At the end of the third year, the School Committee and Select Board can decide if they want to continue and extend the contract. There are a few positions that will be open and once the job description has been approved, the positions can then be posted.

### 5. Five Year Capital Summary

Superintendent Wong stated that we should be reviewing the FY25 Capital and not the Five Year Capital Summary which typically the School Committee is not required to approve because it is fluid.

Chair Fuxman asked if it was possible to only approve the FY25 Capital? Mr. Luff said that we could if someone wants to amend the motion to vote on the first year of the five year summary.

Ms. Brunell asked about the Pre-K East School playground and wanted to know why we would pursue that playgrounds and not others? Superintendent Wong stated that the playground in question is also a Town accessible playground and that it is the only Town playground in that neighborhood.

Ms. Gorseth asked if the East School and property, not under the control of the Natick Public Schools? Superintendent Wong said that was correct and that it is under the control of the Town. Ms. Gorseth also asked when they built the current playground, was there contamination found at the sight? Mr. Luff said yes and that it was in the back behind the baseball field. Ms. Gorseth asked how long are we committed to having the Preschool there? Superintendent Wong said that initially it was for 2 to 4 years and they are now in year two. She stated that it will probably go to the fourth year but that they have asked for a preschool/elementary study to be done. Ms. Gorseth had concerns about building a playground at a school that most likely will not be there in 2 years. Superintendent Wong said that it was reported that putting the preschool at the East School would not limit access on the Town playground.

## *Approval of Minutes*

Ms. Flathers asked what the preschool does now for a playground? Superintendent Wong said that they have been using the Town playground and putting a sign up saying that it can't be accessed during school hours. Ms. Flathers also mentioned that she is onboard with the field redesign but would like a report from Mr. Collins with current field use. Mr. Gillis said that he was going to send it soon.

Mr. Brand asked if we had talked to the Town about sharing the cost of the East School playground? And if not, could we? Mr. Gillis said we haven't yet but that we could. He also stated that the life expectancy of a playground is around 20 years. Superintendent Wong stated that we might want to maintain the amount of preschool classrooms as there is a huge waitlist and thinks the study will help. Mr. Gillis said with his analysis, the preschool will need to be there longer than 2 years as we do not have any open spaces.

Ms. Gorseth asked about the East School facility and if they have access to the gymnasium? Mr. Luff said that it is used and there is accessibility through the back.

Ms. McDonough concerns about the proposal for FY26 specifically for the playground. Wondering who is responsible for the playground? And do we need a \$200,000 playground study? She also asked about the \$250,000 long term enrollment study and is this the correct number? Mr. Gillis said based on his experience with other districts, he thought the \$250,000 seemed reasonable to have architects come in. But if we were content with the 2020 analysis of the buildings then we just need an updated enrollment study.

Ms. Collins mentioned that Mr. Spratt has done a physical assessment of the buildings so between the two, we might only need to do the enrollment piece.

Mr. Brand asked about the budget line for wireless network and switch replacement and wondering if the start date was correct? He stated that the start date says July 1, 2025 but listed in FY25? Mr. Gillis said that he would check with Mr. Roche.

Chair Fuxman made a statement that he supports the playground for the preschool.

### ACTION ITEMS

Chair Fuxman recommended making a motion to approve the FY25 Capital Plan as it is and then make additional amendments.

Ms. McDonough made a motion to approve the FY25 Capital Plan as written with the amendment to reduce the line item for the long term Capital Plan and enrollment study to just an enrollment study and changing the amount to \$100,000. Ms. Collins seconded the motion.

Ms. Flathers stated that she would want a report for the next agenda that has a breakdown of the field use.

Ms. Brunell questioned the 2020 analysis on the buildings and doesn't want to do just an enrollment study

Ms. Brunell made a friendly amendment to add back in the building analysis and Ms. Collins seconded the friendly amendment.

Chair Fuxman stated that with the friendly amendment the motion on the floor is to approve the FY25 Capital Plan as is.

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Chair Fuxman asked all in favor of the motion - 7-0-0

Dr. McKenzie talked about playgrounds in the area.

Ms. Collins motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 pm. Mr. Brand seconded the motion.

All in favor - 7-0-0

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Respectfully submitted by:

Linda McGrath - Recording Secretary

*Natick Public Schools*  
***SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES***  
*December 4, 2023*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday December 4, 2023, at 6:33pm via an in-person and virtual meeting. Chair Fuxman called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:33pm.

Members Present:

Chair Shai Fuxman - present remotely  
Elise Gorseth - present remotely  
Julie McDonough – present (facilitator)  
Cathi Collins - present remotely  
Matt Brand – present  
Catherine Brunell - present  
Kate Flathers - present

Others Present:

Dr. Bella Wong	Interim Superintendent
Tim Luff	Deputy Superintendent
Susan Balboni	Asst. Superintendent for Teaching, Learning & Innovation
Matthew Gillis	Asst. Superintendent of Finance
Linda McGrath	Recording Secretary

**OPEN SESSION**

**Roll Call**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Moment of Silence**

**Announcements**

No announcements ~

**PUBLIC SPEAK**

Chair Fuxman reminded everyone that Public Speak is scheduled for a period of fifteen minutes. Each speaker will be permitted a maximum of three minutes during which time they can speak about topics within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. All remarks will be addressed through the School Committee Chair. Public Speak is not a time for debate or response to comments by the School Committee.

1. Dr. McKenzie - Gave a shout out and a congratulations to all the students that participated in the musical “The Prom”.



TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE - Not present

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE - Inkyoung Lee and Kendall Hacker

Inkyoung talked about the musical “The Prom” and that there will be auditions next week for the show “13”.

Kendall gave an update about the food drive and that they raised 3,000 items. She mentioned having the pep rally before Thanksgiving break and that all staff and students had a good time.

SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES

1. [Review Policies: 2nd Reading - JIC-Student Discipline; JK-Student Conduct; IMGA-Service Animals in School; IMG-Animals in Schools; KBE-Relations with Parent/Booster Organizations](#)

Mr. Brand stated that this is the second reading for the listed above policies (5).

Mr. Luff stated in terms of the process, that everyone has received the policies for a second reading and that he included any back detail to the policies. He also mentioned that in the packet were the first readings, the MASC policies, and the second readings. He had asked for a vote tonight on the final policies but that there is still an opportunity to ask any questions or make modifications up until then.

Mr. Brand made a motion to approve all 5 policies; JIC Student Discipline, JK Student Conduct, IMGA Service Animals in School, IMG Animals in Schools, and KBE Relations with Parent/Booster Organizations. Ms. McDonough second the motion.

Ms. Brunell made a motion to revise policy IMG to accept the MASC IMG policy as uploaded in the packet in place of the policy subcommittee review. Ms. Flathers second the motion.

Mr. Luff wanted to clarify that there were minor changes made by the policy subcommittee from the MASC policy to the second reading policy. The difference between the two are: MASC policy reads “No animal should be brought to school without prior permission of the building principal” with a title heading of “Animals in Schools” and the second reading policy reads “No animal should be brought onto school property without prior permission of the building principal, unless such animal is considered a service animal” with a title heading of “Animals on School Grounds”.

Ms. Brunell discussed the reasoning behind her motion. She stated that she didn’t want our policies to over regulate. She said that it would affect families morning routines when they walk their children to school along with perhaps their dog. Also, in regards to green initiatives, MSBA is encouraging to have walkable schools and if we encourage our families to walk their students to school, it would be helpful for them to be able to walk their dog at the same time.

Ms. Flathers shared her concerns about the policy not distinguishing any hours relating to not having animals on school property. She also mentioned that she hasn’t heard from any Administrators of any burdens with animals on school grounds.

## *Approval of Minutes*

Mr. Brand mentioned that the policy subcommittee made the change from “in school” to “on school grounds” in case there are students who are fearful of animals. He also stated that they made the policy a broader policy so that families would just need to get prior permission from the Principal to bring the animal on school grounds.

Mr. Luff stated that the Principals have mentioned their concerns about families bringing their animals to school during pick-up and drop-off. Plus there is a liability piece if an animal should not be in control.

Mr. Brand asks to clarify Ms. Brunell’s motion and if it was for the one change in the one policy? Ms. Brunell said that it was just for the one policy.

Ms. McDonough suggested separating the policies for voting.

Chair Fuxman mentioned that Ms. Brunell was making an amendment to the motion so if the amendment passes, then you can vote on all five policies and if it doesn’t pass, can still vote on all five policies.

Ms. Brunell commented that if the MASC is not concerned about the policy she amended, then she would trust that they have done their due diligence. She then questioned if there are schools with designated areas where animals cannot cross?

Ms. Collins said she would vote against the amended motion. She doesn’t believe that dogs need to be on school property and believes it would be a liability that we shouldn’t take a chance on.

Ms. Gorseth asked for clarification of the need for this policy? Did this come from the building Principal? Mr. Luff said the need for the policy came from MASC updates to the policies. The policy subcommittee decided to separate into two policies from the one policy titled “Animals in School”. Ms. Gorseth stated that if the Principals are asking for this sort of policy, then she thinks we should stick with the original proposed policy.

Chair Fuxman said that he would vote no on the amendment as we need to focus on the students first if some should be fearful or anxious around them. Additionally, the policy isn’t saying no to animals but with the permission of the building Principal.

Ms. McDonough asked if the policy subcommittee considered the hours of the day for the “No Animals on School Property”? Is it school hours or anytime? Mr. Brand said they did discuss it but chose not to over regulate in that way.

Ms. McDonough read the amendment motion to replace policy IMG with the MASC standard policy on animals on school grounds.

Chair Fuxman took Roll call for vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes

Ms. Brunell - yes

Mr. Brand - no

Ms. McDonough - no

Ms. Collins - no

Ms. Gorseth - no

Chair Fuxman - no

2-5-0 - Amendment does not pass

Chair Fuxman made a motion to approve all 5 policies.

Ms. Flathers - yes  
Ms. Brunell - yes  
Mr. Brand - yes  
Ms. McDonough - yes  
Ms. Collins - yes  
Ms. Gorseth - yes  
Chair Fuxman - yes  
Motion passed - 7-0-0

Ms. Brunell asked when the policies go into effect? Mr. Luff said technically today but will need to be communicated to the families to make sure everyone understands.

Ms. Flathers asked if the Principals have to individually approve dogs or would it be a blanket statement? Mr. Luff said that is a decision for the Administrative Counsel to make as to help determine the best way to implement the policy.

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

#### 1. [Superintendent Search Update](#)

Mr. Brand stated that the Screening Committee has a complete roster which consists of the following:

3 EAN Representatives - Elizabeth Gregg, Marti Neugarten, and Emily Diesel.  
1 Parent Representative from METCO - Tamika Scott  
1 Parent Representative from PPC - Carie Lyn Carnahan  
1 Parent Representative from SPEC - Danielle Newland  
1 Community Member At-Large - Nadini Bajpai  
1 Principal Representative - Aidan McCann from the Brown School  
1 Town Administrator - James Erickson  
1 Student Representative - Bethany Loughran  
1 Central Office Representative - Sue Balboni  
2 School Committee Representatives - Matthew Brand and Catherine Brunell

Mr. Brand said that he is very pleased with the formation of the group and that they will meet for the first time on December 14th to discuss the profile and start looking at resumes. Mr. Brand also mentioned that December 7th is the deadline for any applications for candidates.

Mr. Brand continued with the schedule and said the Screening Committee will start interviewing at the beginning of January and by January 22nd, the Screening Committee will present to the School Committee the 3 to 5 (NESDEC recommendation) finalists. Tentatively that week there will be site visits and likely the week of January 29th, will be the public interviews of the finalists, deliberations and selections.

Mr. Brand stated that the Focus Groups and surveys are closed. The candidate profile summary draft attached was based on the results of the Focus Groups and surveys and is what the Screening Committee is going to use in order to form its profile for the finalists.

## *Approval of Minutes*

Ms. McDonough asked if the site visits are separate from the interviews? Mr. Brand said it was his understanding that the site visits would be first, the public interviews would be last and then deliberations and a decision would happen that night.

Ms. Brunell thought the deliberations and the decision would happen another day.

Chair Fuxman suggested reaching out to NESDEC for their recommendations.

Superintendent Wong mentioned that knowing sooner rather than later what the structure would be regarding the site visits. And just a note that final exams are the week of January 16th.

Chair Fuxman asked for a motion to approve the profile of a candidate letter.

Ms. McDonough made a motion to approve the profile of a candidate for Superintendent. Ms. Bruno seconded the motion.

Ms. Gorseth asked if the committee would want to rank some of the qualifications for the candidate as there are quite a few?

Ms. Brunell said she had spoken to Ms. Dias and that they weren't put in any particular order. Ms. Dias thought that 7 questions were a lot and that it is usually around 5 questions. Ms. Dias also stated that the first 3 questions were consistent in other Focus Groups and surveys. Ms. Brunell wondered if someone only had 6 of the qualifications, would they be eliminated?

Mr. Brand mentioned that there was a typo on page number 2 and that it will be fixed. He said that he agreed with what Ms. Brunell said and wondered what other School Committee members thought about what questions were most important.

Ms. McDonough stated that she didn't feel it was a "check the box" sort of process. She thought that everything seemed standard but that the budget piece got buried which she believes to be critical.

Chair Fuxman thought they all seemed very important and if he went by the phrase "what are the must haves and what are the nice to have " then he thought the last paragraph was a "nice to have" and more of a bonus. This is probably the only skill set he would deprioritize. None of the others he couldn't see the Superintendent delegating or leaning on someone else.

Ms. Collins agreed with the Chair on the paragraph 7 requirements and also agreed with Ms. McDonough that there is a lot of overlap. Ms. Collins mentioned that it appears when looking at the list of skills, experience and knowledge paragraphs, that they are in line of priorities and wasn't sure if that was the case? Ms. Collins also mentioned that she didn't like the clause about "maximum capacity" because that is not the case. She commented that the budget line should be at the top of the list as well.

Ms. Brunell mentioned that this list of skills is for the Screening Committee and not for the candidates. All of the data that created the list came from the Focus Groups and surveys. Ms. Brunell also mentioned to put on the document that this list of skills are not in any kind of order. It is a holistic view of what we are looking for in a Superintendent.

## *Approval of Minutes*

Ms. Flathers had agreed about the budget line and if we were to rank them, there was a lack of focus on the budget. She also commented that perhaps the Screening Committee can think more about the details that are buried within the skills.

Mr. Brand stated that Ms. Dias said all of the data in the report is what was submitted by the Focus Groups and survey and that it was submitted multiple times which is why it was added to the list. He stated that these are guidelines and that not everybody is going to have all of these skills. Mr. Brand also agreed about adding a disclaimer on the document to say that these skills are not in any order of priority.

Chair Fuxman suggested making a friendly amendment to add the phrase “in no particular order” to the section above that reads “... demonstrates a significant depth of skill, experience and knowledge in the following areas”. Ms. McDonough suggested stating the formal amendment as “not listed in order of priority” and asked if the Chair would be okay with that and he said “yes”.

Ms. McDonough made the motion to add the friendly amendment “not listed in order of priority” to the section above that reads “... demonstrates a significant depth of skill, experience and knowledge in the following areas”. Ms. Brunell seconded the motion.

Ms. Collins stated that we need to make sure we also change the sublist in each paragraph to show the friendly amendment.

Ms. Brunell made a friendly amendment to move the line “skilled in bargaining and working effectively with unions” in paragraph 2 to immediately follow the line “...and school building project” at the end of paragraph 5 and to move the sublist in each paragraph to coincide with the friendly amendment.

Superintendent Wong stated that the comprehensive list that was created from feedback from community members does not surprise her. She thought that the key areas were hit and didn’t appear to have anything left out.

Public/Ms. Joyce wanted to give her voice to the skill set of “experience in a diverse setting; committed to diversity, equity and inclusion; committed to effective programming for special education students”. She thought that this was most important.

Chair Fuxman moved to approve the candidate profile with the all friendly amendments that were made.

Chair Fuxman took roll call for vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes  
Ms. Brunell - yes  
Mr. Brand - yes  
Ms. McDonough - yes  
Ms. Gorseth - yes  
Ms. Collins - yes  
Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion approved - 7-0-0

Chair Fuxman thanked all who participated in the Focus Groups and surveys.

## SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent Wong commented on the NILS day that the district held on November 27th and how great it turned out. She gave a thank you to Grace Magley who is the Director of Personalized and Digital Learning. Superintendent Wong also mentioned the musical “The Prom” and how wonderful it was. She also mentioned that the musical “Elf” will be performing next weekend at Wilson.

Superintendent Wong wanted to mention the annual METCO conference that was held on Friday, December 1st and how well planned it was with morning and afternoon sessions and with inspirational speakers.

1. [METCO Program Overview - a. METCO 2.0 - b. METCO Transportation Request](#)

Ms. Clayton talked about the program overview for METCO 2.0 which is an evaluation of the METCO partner districts. METCO headquarters has hired a consultant, EAB, to survey the METCO partner districts. They spoke with Directors, Principals, Central Office Staff and Faculty to synthesize the data on the following characteristics:

1. Vision for anti-racism and culturally responsive practices
2. Discussion of race and equity.
3. Student’s sense of belonging.
4. Recruitment and retainment of diverse culturally responsive staff.

The rating categories are:

1. Not started yet
2. Emerging
3. Maturing
4. Exemplary

Ms. Clayton stated that the results will be forthcoming and would share them at that point.

Ms. Clayton then shared the skilled indicator for each category:

1. What areas are we making progress?
2. What are the opportunities for growth?
3. And how this discussion tonight lends itself to a student’s sense of belonging.

Ms. Clayton read one subset from each of the categories.

Ms. Clayton then continued to read the proposal which talked about an increase in grades and transportation. She noted that Natick has now brought in an elementary cohort/ a full K - 12 grade model and also talked about adding another bus which would help the middle school students gain an additional 15 minutes in the morning. Ms. Clayton stated that as a district, they will continue to advocate for expansion dollars and increase funding.

Superintendent Wong mentioned that Natick received a special commendation in the report Ms. Clayton had eluded to. She also stated that the School Committee has already approved the additional transportation to support the expansion of the program to include Kindergarteners. Superintendent Wong talked about another form of transportation that Ms. Clayton had talked about which would allow the additional time in the morning, allow for additional after school activities, and a separation between middle and high school students. She also talked about the supplemental budget being approved and when it is, we are still not sure what will be coming to Natick. The

## *Approval of Minutes*

METCO program was level funded so she does expect that there will be some additional funding that will be a part of the supplemental budget but not sure how much?

Mr. Gillis said the estimated cost for the additional bus for next year would be about \$171,000 and the Special Education van with a monitor would be about \$92,000 both using a 15% increase. He said he doesn't like to estimate too high because of the contracts going out for bid next year.

Mr. Brand moved to approve creating a general fund transportation line item for METCO transportation in the amount of \$86,600 and Mr. Gillis will bring the account transfer or transfers to the next meeting for approval. Ms. Collins second the motion.

Mr. Brand questioned what the need was for the additional transportation for mid year but after Ms. Clayton's presentation tonight he understood why. He stated that the METCO students should have the same equitable access to programs like all students.

Ms. Gorseth asked about the current late bus being funded by METCO and why was it only contracted for 3 out of 4 days for after school programs? Ms. Clayton had mentioned that in earlier days, there were cuts and part of those cuts was a reduction in the late bus service. Upon rebounding later on, they were able to have transportation for 2 days only. Ms. Gorseth stated that she would support adding additional funds for the current late bus to run another day rather than adding a whole additional bus.

Ms. Gorseth then asked what would be covered this year under the METCO expansion? Would elementary transportation fall under the grant as part of that expansion or would we have to be approved for expansion? Ms. Clayton said that we would still have to be approved.

Ms. Gorseth asked about the Student Services transportation and does that fall under the METCO budget or is that our responsibility always? Superintendent Wong stated that the Special Education is covered under the general fund.

Ms. Gorseth expressed concern about voting for the \$86,600 for this year but what we really are doing is voting for that and \$171,000 going forward adding it to the FY25 budget and if the METCO expansion does not go through, we will have to add that amount.

Superintendent Wong stated that the METCO grant was level funded so with the supplemental budget she thought it didn't mean without expansion across the board.

Ms. Clayton stated that there is a Special Education grant for which they received \$30,000 and could be used towards transportation.

Ms. Collins believed that they did make the commitment on the additional bus and we need to make reservations for the funds.

Ms. Flathers questioned the figures and what buses we need for this year and next year? Ms. Clayton explained for next year there would be two buses for Kindergarten through 12th grade and one would cover the late run. For this year, the second bus should it be added, would cover the late run. Ms. Flathers asked was it considered for the FY24 budget? Superintendent Wong stated that the district was anticipating the supplemental budget. Mr. Luff mentioned that conversations started on December 19th then early January and then it was pushed to March and then by June they moved forward with it.



## *Approval of Minutes*

Chair Fuxman stated that he will support the motion that Mr. Brand made because a commitment was made to METCO students to be part of the Natick community and participate in everything Natick has to offer. If this isn't approved, it will have an impact on the students.

Ms. Brunell questioned the earmarks. She said for last year, there was \$100,000 approved for on-line tutoring service and \$50,000 for after school buses and wanted to know what those monies are being used for?

Mr. Gillis said that it charted out as a transportation van, Special Education and monitor as a way to show a placeholder for the \$150,000 for transportation. Mr. Gillis stated that there was another earmark of \$600,000 that was being divided amongst 5 towns so \$100,00 for Natick was being used towards METCO transportation. Ms. Brunell agreed with Chair Fuxman that the School Committee supports the METCO program. She also asked (relating to Ms. Gorseth's question) can we expand the bus contract to add an additional day for this year for after school activities? Mr. Gillis said that if we add approximately 22 Monday late bus runs (the added day for afternoon activities), the additional cost would be \$12,980.

Ms. Flathers suggested an amendment to the motion for adding an additional day to the bus contract we currently have and not adding another bus.

Ms. McDonough questioned the earmarks of \$150,000 being used for the METCO transportation. She reviewed that we have \$100,000 for the on-line tutoring service which is being used, \$50,000 for staff development which Mr. Gillis stated it will be used for, \$50,000 for after school buses which is going towards the METCO buses, and \$100,000 which is for mental health needs and are we applying that to the METCO program? She commented that the \$100,000 grant for mental health needs is for all students in the district so how are we funding that? Mr. Luff stated that he will need to look at the budget overall. Mr. Gillis stated that from a previous memo that he thought was approved from last June, that the \$100,000 was to go towards METCO transportation. Ms. McDonough stated that she supports the METCO expansion but thinks this should be considered for next year's budget that is voted on in March and doesn't support the motion.

Chair Fuxman stated there was a motion to request and asked if anyone wanted to make specific amendments to the motion?

Ms. Gorseth made an alternative motion to authorize expenditures of up to \$15,000 to increase the METCO late bus to 4 afternoons a week instead of 3 days for FY24. Ms. Flathers seconded the motion.

Ms. Collins asked if the bus company is willing to do an additional late run day, and Mr. Gillis said that they could for the same rate.

Mr. Brand wanted to review the two motions - The second motion would allow an additional day for the afternoon but would not include the change for the morning as the first motion does. However, this would be taken into consideration for next year.

Chair Fuxman took a roll call to vote on the first motion as is:

Ms. Gorseth - no  
Ms. Collins - yes  
Ms. McDonough - no  
Mr. Brand - no  
Ms. Brunell - no  
Ms. Flathers - no



## *Approval of Minutes*

Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion does not pass - 2-5-0

Chair Fuxman took a roll call to vote on the second motion:

Ms. Flathers - yes

Ms. Brunell - yes

Mr. Brand - yes

Ms. McDonough - yes

Ms. Gorseth - yes

Ms. Collins - no

Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion was approved - 6-1-0

Superintendent Wong wanted to affirm everything that has happened in support of the METCO program. She said while we didn't expand the numbers, we expanded the program.

Mr. Gillis wanted to clarify that the School Committee wants to see the transportation costs for the METCO program that are not covered by the grant or the current earmarked funds in the FY25 budget request.

Ms. Flathers asked if there will be more discussion about optimizing the routes for next year? Ms. Clayton said "yes".

Chair Fuxman asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Brand made a motion to approve. Ms. McDonough seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman took a roll call to vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes

Ms. Brunell - yes

Mr. Brand - yes

Ms. McDonough - yes

Ms. Gorseth - yes

Ms. Collins - yes

Chair Fuxman - yes

Ms. Collins motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 PM. Mr. Brand seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman took a roll call to vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes

Ms. Brunell - yes

Mr. Brand - yes

Ms. McDonough - yes

Ms. Gorseth - yes

Ms. Collins - yes

Chair Fuxman - yes

DRAFT

*Natick Public Schools*  
***SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES***  
*December 18, 2023*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, December 18, 2023, at 6:06 pm via an in-person and virtual meeting. Chair Fuxman called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:06 pm.

Dr. Shai Fuxman – present  
Ms. Elise Gorseth – present  
Ms. Julie McDonough – present  
Ms. Cathi Collins – present remotely  
Mr. Matthew Brand – present  
Ms. Catherine Brunell – present  
Ms. Kate Flathers - present

Others Present:	Ms. Bella Wong	Interim Superintendent
	Mr. Tim Luff	Deputy Superintendent
	Ms. Sue Balboni	Asst. Superintendent for Teaching, Learning & Innovation
	Mr. Matthew Gillis	Asst. Superintendent for Finance
	Ms. Linda McGrath	Recording Secretary

Chair Fuxman stated that the meeting is being recorded for future viewing.

**OPEN SESSION**

- Roll Call
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Moment of Silence - To honor those who have sacrificed for our country
- Announcements

Superintendent Wong wanted to recognize the Natick girl's soccer team who are the Massachusetts State Division 1 Champions. The girls also won the state championship back in 2021.

Chair Fuxman made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 6:10 for the following: Mr. Brand second the motion.

Chair Fuxman took roll call for a vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes  
Ms. Brunell - yes  
Mr. Brand - yes  
Ms. Collins - yes  
Ms. McDonough - yes  
Ms. Gorseth - yes  
Chair Fuxman - yes

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with Non-Represented Personnel (Waste Reduction Coordinator; Supplementary Theatre Positions; Teachers Covering Class)

To comply with or act under the authority of any general or special law, specifically Chapter 30A, Section 21 (g)(1), the public body, or its Chair or Designee, shall, at reasonable intervals, review the minutes of Executive Sessions to determine if the provisions of this subsection warrant continued non-disclosure.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (EAN, Unit B) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair declares.

REVISION - To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Chair Fuxman stated that we returned to open session at approximately 6:35 pm.

### Open Session

#### Student Representative - Kendall Hacker

Kendall said there were not a lot of updates right before the break but the winter concert is this Friday.

### Announcements

Superintendent Wong read a letter from Police Chief Hicks thanking the School District for their support of the Marsha Kelly giving tree. Ms. Brunell had mentioned that the NorthStar students had delivered the gifts to the children.

Chair Fuxman addressed the public regarding a statement that Ms. Brunell was about to read regarding acts of hatred. And to provide additional context per open meeting law, neither the Committee as a whole nor a quorum of the Committee developed or deliberated on this statement. Both Ms. Gorseth and Superintendent Wong (who is not a member of the School Committee) reviewed the statement but all members were alerted that the statement was being read.

Ms. Brunell proceeded to read the statement regarding any sort of hate incident and how it affects everyone.

### PUBLIC SPEAK

Public Speak is scheduled for a period of fifteen minutes. Each speaker will be permitted a maximum of three minutes during which time they can speak about topics within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. All remarks will be addressed through the School Committee Chair. Public Speak is not a time for debate or response to comments by the School Committee.

1. Farrah Rubenstein - Discussed the hate crimes happening in Natick currently regarding ability, gender, sexuality, religion, race, ethnicity, culture and her concerns for the safety of all children.
2. Johanna Edelson - Discussed the hate crimes against Israel and the safety of her child.

3. Rabbi Raysh Weiss - Read a letter that was written by friends, colleagues, and faith leaders in Natick. The letter talked about the support for the Natick Public Schools in their efforts to provide full inclusion, affirmation, and celebration of LGBTQIA+ children and youth.
4. Dr. Miri Bar-Halpern - Shared her concerns about the MTA statement and the safety of the students while in school as well as some of the curriculum that is being taught.
5. Dr. Donna McKenzie - Talked about the 10th opioid vigil from last night's opioid vigil. She commented how moved she was by Josepha Blocker's (Principal of the High School) speech and that she stated we need to reach out and speak to those who are in trouble.

### Teacher Representative - Jefferson Wood

Mr. Wood discussed the recent requests from the community for an action or statement from the teacher's union (EAN) and there are some from the union who feel a response is warranted and there are those who feel that actions or statements by the union on certain issues, however well intended, are inappropriate.

In regards to the MTA passing a motion to support a petition, and the wording of the announcement raised concerns in the community and the union does not take the concerns lightly.

Mr. Wood stated that the teachers condemn acts of hate and that they work daily to create a safe environment for the students. He also stated that he feels the Jewish students are safe in our schools and if any parents have concerns, to please speak to their teacher.

### CONSENT AGENDA

1. [Approval of School Committee Open Session Minutes dated 6/12/23](#)
2. [Approval of Field Trip to Yale University](#)
3. Approval of Field Trip to Natick Town Hall and METCO HQ - pull
4. Approval of Field Trip to Kennedy Institute - pull
5. Approval of Field Trip to Boston College Model UN Conference - pull
6. Approval of Updates to the Non-Rep Salary Schedule - pull

Ms. McDonough asked to have the following items pulled from the consent agenda since they are not out of state field trips: Field trips to Natick Town Hall, Kennedy Institute and Boston College.

Ms. McDonough made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Brand seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman took role call for vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes  
Ms. Brunell - yes  
Mr. Brand - yes  
Ms. McDonough - yes  
Ms. Gorseth - yes  
Ms. Collins - yes

Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion passed 7-0-0

Ms. McDonough questioned money being allotted for field trips for elementary and middle schools out of next year's budget and wondered how the high school field trips were being funded? Also, do we want to include money in next year's budget for high school field trips?

Superintendent Wong said she wasn't sure how they were funded but would look into it. Also, she stated that although the field trips were pulled from the agenda, doesn't mean they weren't approved. It just meant that they didn't need to be approved by the School Committee.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

### 1. Appointment of School Committee Member or Designee to Net Zero Committee

Chair Fuxman discussed the appointment of a School Committee member or designee to the Net Zero Committee. He explained that prior there used to be a committee called Sustainability Committee where a School Committee member was a representative but that committee has since disbanded. Now there is a new committee called Net Zero Committee. This committee comprises 6 members which include 1 School Committee member that will be a representative.

Ms. McDonough asked if these are public meetings where a quorum has to be present? Chair Fuxman thought that they were as they are a committee of the Select Board and abide by the Open Meeting Laws. Ms. McDonough asked how many times do they meet? Mr. Brand said no less than 10 times a year. Ms. Flathers mentioned once a month.

Ms. Gorseth asked who we had as a representative on the Sustainability Committee? Chair Fuxman said that Ms. Collins was the representative for the original committee but that he and Ms. Flathers were assigned for the sustainability goals.

Chair Fuxman asked for a nomination of a School Committee member or that it could be anyone from the community. Ms. Flathers offered to be on the committee.

Ms. Collins nominated Ms. Flathers to be the School Committee representative for the Net Zero Committee. Mr. Brand seconded the nomination.

Ms. Collins stated that she thinks it is important to have a School Committee member on this committee.

Chair Fuxman took role call for vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes

Ms. Brunell - yes

Mr. Brand - yes

Ms. McDonough - yes

Ms. Gorseth - yes

Ms. Collins - yes

Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion passed 7-0-0

## SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES

### 1. Superintendent Search

Mr. Brand stated that the Screening Committee had its first meeting on Thursday, December 14th. He mentioned that one of the public announcements was that they have 32 candidates applying which NESDEC said was above average. Mr. Brand said their second meeting is Tuesday, December 15th and that they are in the process of reading all the resumes and then figure out who they are going to interview. The following is an updated schedule:

1. The interviews of approximately 8 to 12 candidates are hoping to be the first week in January and from there figuring out who the finalists would be.
2. Possibly present the finalists to the School Committee on January 8th but more likely to be on January 22nd.
3. The site visits would most likely be the week of January 22nd.
4. Once those dates are scheduled, they will then schedule the public interviews which would be around January 29th.

Mr. Brand stated that the schedule is tentative as everyone's schedules will need to line up for the schedule to work. The aim is for about 3 to 5 finalists.

Ms. Brunell thought potentially the public interviews would take place the week of January 22nd once the announcement has been made.

Ms. Balboni stated that right now the issue is identifying how many of the candidates they will be interviewing but that everyone on the committee is motivated for the first week in January.

Ms. Gorseth asked if the screening interviews will be in person or through Zoom? Mr. Brand stated that they will be in person but not to the public. She also asked for the week of January 22nd, will the candidates site visits already be scheduled for that week since they would have been announced to the School Committee by then? Mr. Brand said no.

Ms. Brunell mentioned that the School Committee would have to accept the nominations first before the meetings.

Ms. Collins was concerned about the public interviews and thought they should be held on a Saturday. She stated that spreading them out during the week could be a disservice to the candidates and the committee as well.

Ms. Gorseth commented that she would not support having the interviews on the weekend as she thought it could conflict with religious services.

Ms. Brunell thought that the interviews and the School Committee meeting would work during the week.

Ms. Collins commented that she would prefer all the interviews on one day and there were about 4 or 5, it wouldn't be possible.

Dr. Donna McKenzie commented that having it on a Saturday or Sunday would not work because of religious services.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

### 1. [Special Education Report - Erin Miller](#)

Superintendent Wong introduced Ms. Erin Miller who is the Director of Student Services and Equity for an overview of Special Education.

Ms. Miller presented a powerpoint (linked above) for Student Services that talked about continuing services, data that is used, and budget information for the future.

Superintendent Wong gave recognition to Erin for all the work that she has done and for this only being her second year in the role. She asked when the mandated DESE evaluation for dyslexia was? Mr. Luff said that the requirements are that we should have screening protocols in place especially for the lower grades.

Ms. Brunell commented on the EL population and how successful they are. She also commented on the out of the country students and wanted to know what the largest language would be? Ms. Miller stated that the top languages are: Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese, and Korean but numbers that are close behind are Arabic, Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu. Ms. Brunell talked about the Orton-Gillingham summer courses and asked if a teacher wanted to take the course, would they be able to? Ms. Miller said that they did budget for that course last year and were able to send 22 teachers and should be able to send around 20 teachers for this year through a voucher system.

Ms. McDonough asked about slide 14 that shows the total of IEPs and the total of students per the number of teachers and questioned the ratios? Ms. Miller stated that this chart looks at if new staff is needed in the future and how we would allocate that. She also commented on EL instruction and the communication with families. She recommended using Parent Square, which is a communication tool where an Administrator, teacher, staff member, etc.. can write something in English and it will automatically switch it over to their native language. Possibly something to consider for the budget in the future. Ms. Balboni mentioned that they are looking at that option.

Ms. Collins questioned the bar chart for Special Education for 2024 and stated that the total number of referrals weren't adding up? Ms. Miller said that she will need to look it over and see where the discrepancies are? She also questioned the EL increase and wondered if it is the number of students or the number of languages? Ms. Miller said it was both. Her last question was in regards to McKinney-Vento and the transportation budget between FY23 and FY24? Mr. Luff stated that Mr. Gillis is looking into allocating appropriate transportation amounts in the projected budget which includes McKinney-Vento.

Chair Fuxman asked about the Special Education increase, the increase in evaluations and what are the implications for the budget since we will need additional staff. Ms. Miller stated that these evaluations jobs are very complex and that she will be looking for additional support staff. Chair Fuxman questioned the nurse visits between the years of 22/23 and 23/24 and saw a huge decline and asked why the decline? Ms. Miller said that she would ask Ms. Marcinkiewicz to get clarification but that they have been dealing with more acute situations.

Ms. Miller stated that in January for SPEC night there will be Transition Night and they will have a Transition Night with the ACHIEVE Program on January 23, 2024.



## 2. FY25 Budget Preliminary Update

Superintendent Wong asked about the budget for Student Services and perhaps the percentage for services is around 50% which is a big part of the budget. Ms. Miller agreed that everything included, it would be around that percentage.

Superintendent Wong mentioned that the budget presentation would be in about 1 or 2 meetings. One piece that needs to be resolved first is the transportation bid.

Ms. Collins asked if we would be able to get a better idea of the numbers as we go through the presentations? Or wait for a holistic view for the January 22nd meeting? Superintendent Wong said they would put out a holistic view on the January 22 meeting.

Ms. McDonough asked if we anticipate presentations from Technology and Curriculum on the same or will it be built into the larger budget? Superintendent Wong said it would be built into the larger budget.

Chair Fuxman introduced friends from the Rotary Club for their annual donation of dictionaries. Andrew Meyer and Dan Shea gave a presentation about the Dictionary Donation Program to 3rd grade students and said they are in their 17th year. They also talked about the Make a Difference foundation which offers after school programs to students that financially might not be able to.

Ms. Collins made a motion to accept the dictionary donations to the Natick Public Schools from the Rotary Club. Ms. Brunell seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman took role call for vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes  
Ms. Brunell - yes  
Mr. Brand - yes  
Ms. McDonough - yes  
Ms. Gorseth - yes  
Ms. Collins - yes  
Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion passed 7-0-0

Dr. Donna McKenzie thanked the Rotary Club for all their work.

3. 2024-2025 Draft Calendar - Superintendent's Report continued...

- a. [Option 1](#)
- b. [Option 2](#)

Mr. Luff went over the two options for the 2024/2025 calendar. He stated that these calendars offer the religious observances that were discussed prior and school closures on major holidays. The major difference between the two is the winter break days.

Ms. Gorseth asked if we could get a report on attendance for (for teachers and students) for last year around the holidays before voting? Mr. Luff stated that they did get feedback from last year for the major holidays, and it was a low attendance count.

Mr. Wood commented that it usually is a common practice for parents to pull their child out before the holidays and wasn't sure if an attendance would show the exact count.

Ms. Collins asked Ms. McDonough how her committee is proceeding? Ms. McDonough stated that following the Superintendent search where there would be community engagement, there would be a process in spring for more in depth community outreach and engagement on the calendar. Chair Fuxman stated that it would be for future calendars but that we need to vote on this calendar.

Mr. Luff explained the question mark on November 20th for the middle school early release. We are in the middle of negotiations with the EAN regarding conferences and will have the conversation prior to making a determination.

Ms. McDonough pointed out in option 2 that students are only in school for November for 13 days and she was concerned about the winter break days and that school would end a little later. She also mentioned that maybe Good Friday could be a half day and should take a look at NILS day.

Superintendent Wong thought the calendar should be voted on by the next meeting on January 8th.

Chair Fuxman questioned about holiday travel and thought it didn't make sense to have school on the 12/23 and 12/24. He also mentioned the primary day being less popular and therefore decided to have school on the day.

4. Johnson Elementary School - Declaration Regarding Educational Use

Superintendent Wong stated that the School Committee voted that The Johnson School will close at the end of this school year on June 30, 2024.. After talking with legal counsel, we learned that we need a six month notice. She also stated that there are no plans at this time for the building.

Mr. Luff stated that legal counsel had said there is a process to turn the building back to the town. During this time, we are required to report to the State that we are closing the school and giving it back to the Town. Mr. Luff also talked about how we would be supporting the Johnson students and families and how we have been slowly cohorting the students to the other schools over the past two years. There is a vote tonight to declare that The Johnson School is no longer needed for educational services as of midnight June 30, 2024.

Ms. Flathers asked what would happen if the 6 month deadline was missed? Superintendent Wong said that it would probably roll into the next fiscal year which could end up being a liability issue. Mr. Luff said it would affect the impact of when the Town meeting could vote on it, and decide what to do with the building. Ms. Flather's also asked if there was anything the Town could use the building for next year with the change of use? Mr. Luff said that would be a question for the building inspector.

Ms. Collins commented that if we don't give DESE 6 months that ends in this fiscal year, that it could likely compromise any MSBA filing that we do in April and would encourage the committee to vote to have it taken care of in FY24.

Ms. Brunell questioned the MSBA process and would this vote benefit us? Superintendent Wong said she didn't think it would.

Ms. McDonough asked if we didn't vote to turn it over, would we still be able to run the YMCA program next year? Mr. Luff said that we could not run any program without the primary use occurring at the same time.

Ms. Flathers expressed concerns about the building closing from an enrollment perspective. Since the decision to close the school due to declining enrollment, new data has been brought forward showing just the opposite. She mentioned not being able to get another school for about 7 to 8 years.

Ms. Collins commented that we wouldn't have had to do this if we were keeping Johnson School open until 2025. The reference to space and overcrowding, is because of MSBA's calculations as to how big room sizes should be and not how many seats and doesn't believe this should be delayed.

Public - Ms. Vickers stated that the community feels abused and that the public was not allowed to have their input as there was no community outreach.

Ms. McDonough asked if there was time to do a memorandum of understanding with the Town or do we rely on the relationships that we have? After seeing the enrollment numbers, what if we need the space again? She also said that the community was promised an input as to what would happen to the building and grounds so how can we fulfill that promise in this vote? Superintendent Wong stated that it was her understanding that the decision to close the Johnson School was already made. She understands how difficult and sensitive the process was and how it impacts the community. She believes that there is a lot of good will and good intentions from both School and Town Administration for a meaningful reuse of the building. Superintendent Wong stated that the requirement for ADA compliance is a daunting challenge.

Ms. Gorseth asked about the primary use being Kindergarten through 12th grade and wondered if the preschool is located at the high school, is that an ancillary use? Mr. Luff said the building inspector had used language that said Kindergarten through 12th grade educational use. Mr. Gillis said that the building inspector had stated recreational use or educational use and that there are different standards for both. Ms. Gorseth questioned the East School and what is the primary use? Mr. Luff said that it is currently an educational use. He said that they had a hard time finding a way to keep it a Kindergarten through 12th grade primary use that would work with the building inspector.

Ms. Brunell asked if there is ever a reason to keep a school empty in case it was needed down the road? Superintendent Wong thought that it would just deteriorate if left empty. She said that you really need to find a use for the building and they were trying to come up with something but coming up against ADA compliance.

Ms. Gorseth asked if we have done the “change of use” just by closing the school? Mr. Luff said anything that went into the building other than a primary program under a K-12, would require a change of use.

Chair Fuxman asked if we are in an enrollment crisis situation for elementary students? Superintendent Wong said she doesn't feel that there is an enrollment crisis and thought the class sizes were good.

Mr. Luff suggested adding a piece to the vote requesting that the Town seek input from the Johnson neighborhood community as well as other community members for the future use.

Ms. Collins made a motion to move that the Natick School Committee declare that the Johnson Elementary School is no longer needed for educational purposes after 11:59 pm on June 30, 2024 subject to a vote at Town meeting. Mr. Brand seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman asked if anyone wanted to make an amendment? Ms. Collins explained why she didn't and said the Select Board will have a process to decide what to do with the building and that this isn't the end of the road for people voicing their concerns.

Ms. Brunell wanted to say that although the proposed vote tonight is to end the relationship between the School Committee and the Johnson School, the School Committee needs to make a commitment not to end the relationship with the Johnson community.

#### 5. [New Staff Organizational Chart for the School Technology Department](#)

Superintendent Wong talked about the consolidation of services (60/40 ratio - school at 60%) with the School District and the Town and presented an organizational chart. She said this chart was to meet the request that was made earlier and that is just informational.

Ms. Gorseth asked if the two new positions fall under the shared resources? Superintendent Wong said there are potential shared resources but the job description says they are primarily School but can provide service to Town. Ms. Gorseth asked who is monitoring the new positions? Superintendent Wong stated that it would be Dennis Roche, Chief Technology Officer.

Mr. Brand asked for clarification with the new positions that fall under shared resources, are they at 60/40 % like the CTO or are we paying for them? Superintendent Wong thought they fall under mostly the School at around 90%.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. [Vote to declare that the Johnson Elementary School is no longer needed for educational purposes effective midnight June 30, 2024.](#)

Ms. Collins made a motion to move that the Natick School Committee declare that the Johnson Elementary School is no longer needed for educational purposes after 11:59 pm on June 30, 2024 subject to a vote at Town meeting. Mr. Brand seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman took a roll call for a vote:

Ms. Flathers - no  
Ms. Brunell - yes

Mr. Brand - yes  
Ms. McDonough  
Ms. Gorseth - yes  
Ms. Collins - yes  
Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion passes - 6-1-0

2. Vote to appoint School Committee Member or Designee to Net Zero Committee

Ms. Collins nominated Ms. Flathers to be the School Committee representative for the Net Zero Committee. Mr. Brand seconded the nomination.

Chair Fuxman took role call for vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes  
Ms. Brunell - yes  
Mr. Brand - yes  
Ms. McDonough - yes  
Ms. Gorseth - yes  
Ms. Collins - yes  
Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion passed 7-0-0

Mr. Brand made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 pm and Ms. Gorseth seconded the motion.

Chair Fuxman took role call for vote:

Ms. Flathers - yes  
Ms. Brunell - yes  
Mr. Brand - yes  
Ms. McDonough - yes  
Ms. Gorseth - yes  
Ms. Collins - yes  
Chair Fuxman - yes

Motion passed 7-0-0



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**ITEM TITLE:** Approval for Change of High School Class Dues from \$100 to \$125 starting with the Class of 2028

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

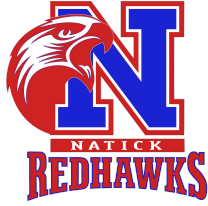
**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

Description	File Name	Type
approval for increase of high school student fees	Rationale_for_Increase_in_Class_Dues__Winter_2024.pdf	Cover Memo



# Natick High School

Winter 2024

Principal: Josepha Blocker

## Proposal:

*Raise the fee for Class Dues from \$100 to \$125, starting with the Class of 2028*

## Rationale:

- We are hoping to increase the number of class activities to build spirit and community for each graduating class earlier in their high school experience. We are growing in size, and this is more important than ever.
- We currently have Class Dues for each grade level set at \$100, and they have not been raised in a while.

## Info and History

- These dues are a one-time fee, and meant to cover the cost of class events with the exception of the prom. (The prom cost for students is lowered by the dues, but not eliminated.)
- Issue #1: In order to plan class events, the classes need "up front" money to pay for the events. Most students don't pay the dues until later in high school when they really start thinking about the boat cruise (11th grade) and the senior activities. This limits the ability of earlier grades to plan things.
- Issue #2: Even if they got all the dues money up front, they couldn't can't plan "bigger" events, because their overall expected revenue through dues wouldn't cover these events and the customary junior/senior events for each class.
  - Classes have started charging for events, which makes students less likely to attend.
  - The events that students can plan in 9th and 10th grade are necessarily much smaller. Consequently, the number of attendees has been relatively small, because they don't attract a big crowd.
  - This means that often, for these smaller events, even when they charge a fee, the class barely breaks even, or even loses money. Given that, many classes have decided that the work isn't worth the effort to plan earlier events since they aren't generating a lot of money, and there isn't high attendance.

## Our Hope

- The hope is that with more money overall, and with each early dues-payer's money stretching a little further, we could:



- Increase the potential scope of events for earlier classes, which could increase attendance and a sense of community, and also generate increased funds going forward
- Offset some of the inflationary cost increases since our last change of fee

---

**ITEM TITLE:** Student Global Travel - Jason Hoyer/High School Dean of Students

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND**

**INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ITEM TITLE:** MA Educators Tour - Helsinki/Tallinn (Tim Luff-Deputy Superintendent, Joseph Blocker-High School Principal, Karen Ghilani-Ben/Hem Elementary Principal)

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND**

**INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

---

**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Type</b>
MA Educators Tour - Finland	Finland_for_School_Committee.pdf	Cover Memo

# Educational Learning Trip

Finland and Estonia, Fall 2023

---





## Our Travelers

16 Educators including...

*Superintendents, Student Services  
Directors, Elementary and High School  
Principals, Union Leader, Curriculum  
Leaders, Educational Consultants*

### **5 Massachusetts Districts Represented**

- Harvard
- Lincoln-Sudbury
- Natick
- Needham
- Wayland
- Wellesley

**Bella Wong, Tim Luff, Karen Ghilani and  
Josepha Blocker were so proud to  
represent Natick!**

# Our Educational Learning Tour

## *Visited Five Schools including...*

- Urban, Suburban and Rural Settings;
- All levels of education, K-12
- Varying sizes

## Visited Other Educational Environments...

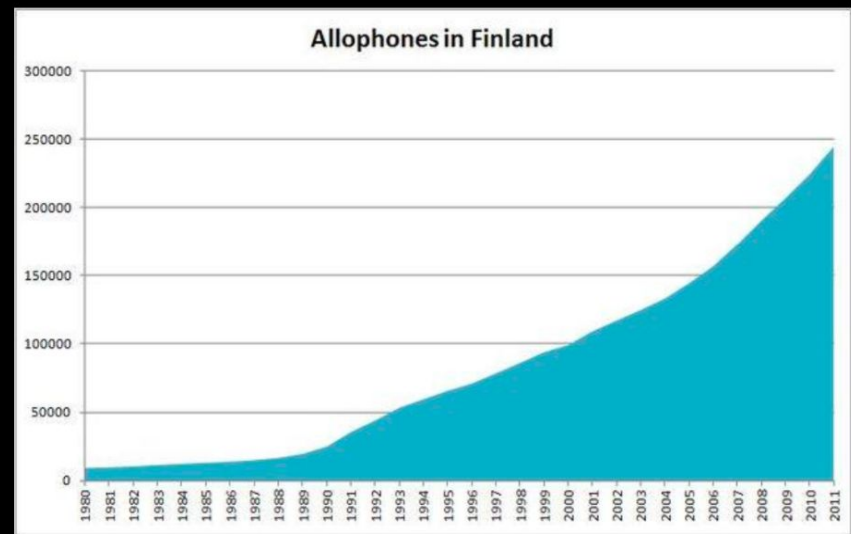
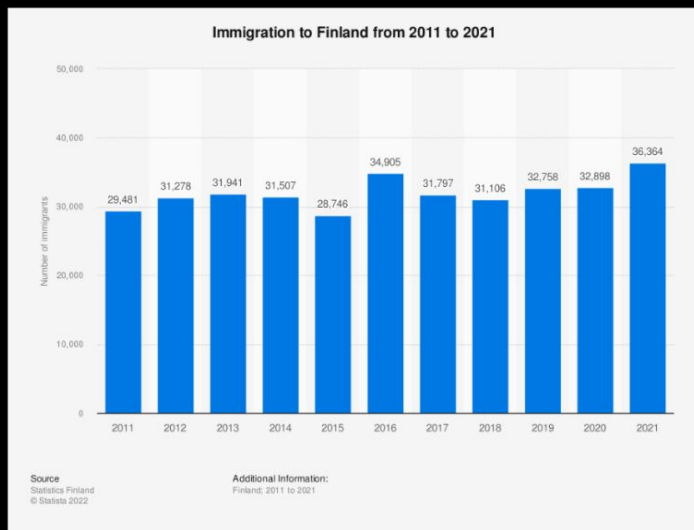
- A Teacher Training School
- Visited the Ministry of Education (DESE equivalent)
- Engaged in 4 PD sessions on Finnish and

## Established Continued Professional Learning Partnerships

- Follow-up meeting in January to process takeaways
- Beginning of a High School Instruction and Learning Working Group including Lincoln-Sudbury, Needham, Natick, Wellesley and Wayland administrators
- [Article from Needham our Needham Counterparts](#)

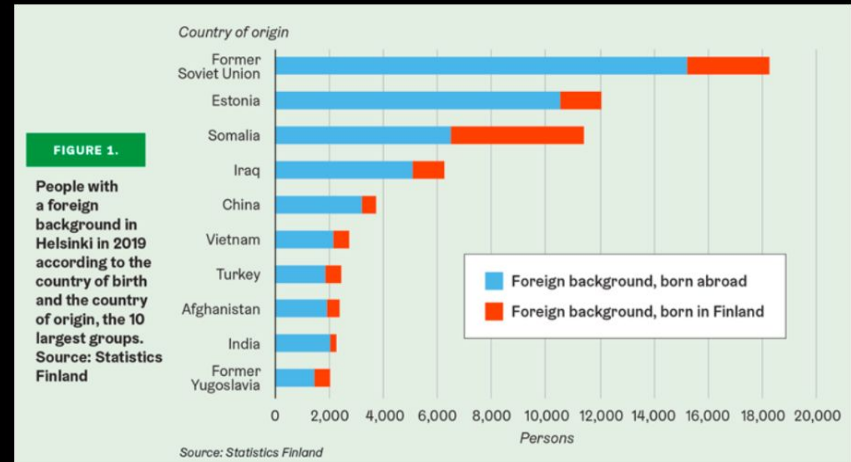
# Finnish & Estonian Demographics





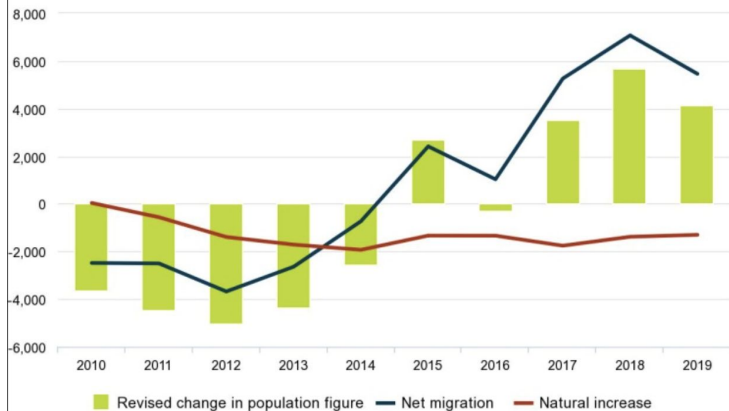
Population of Finland is  
5 540 745

8,5% have foreign background  
(9,5% in Helsinki)





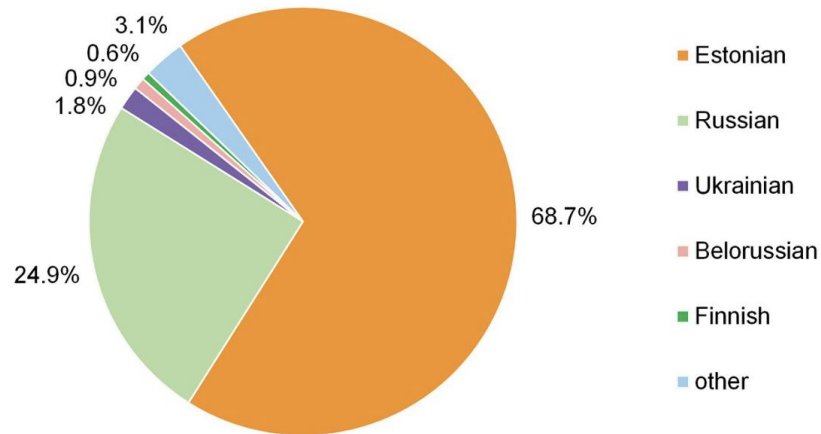
Population change, 2010–2019



Source: Statistics Estonia

Estonia's Population:  
1,328.976

Estonia ethnic composition (2018\*)



**Capital and largest city:** Tallinn

**Official language:** Estonian

**Ethnic groups (2023):** 67.8% Estonians · 22.0% Russians · 10.2% other

**Religion (2021):** 58.4% no religion · 26.7% Christianity · 12.7% undeclared · 2.2% other

**Demonym(s):** Estonian

**Government:** Unitary parliamentary republic

# Finnish Educational Values



# ASSESSMENT



Teachers design

Versatile methods

Success criteria

# Equal opportunities



Neighbourhood schools



Little ranking and competing



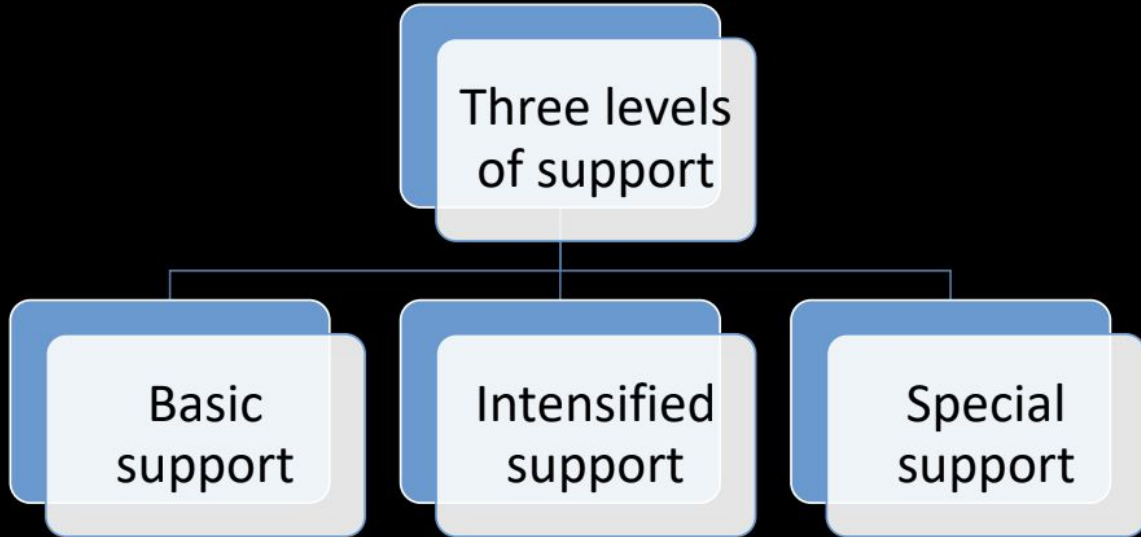
Education is free

## **The “Finnish Way”**

- Integrated learning practices
- High trust
- “Home cooked” meal
- Lots of recess/a shorter day
- Teacher/School autonomy
- Flexible curriculum
- Highly qualified teachers
- Looping

# Diagnosis and support plan

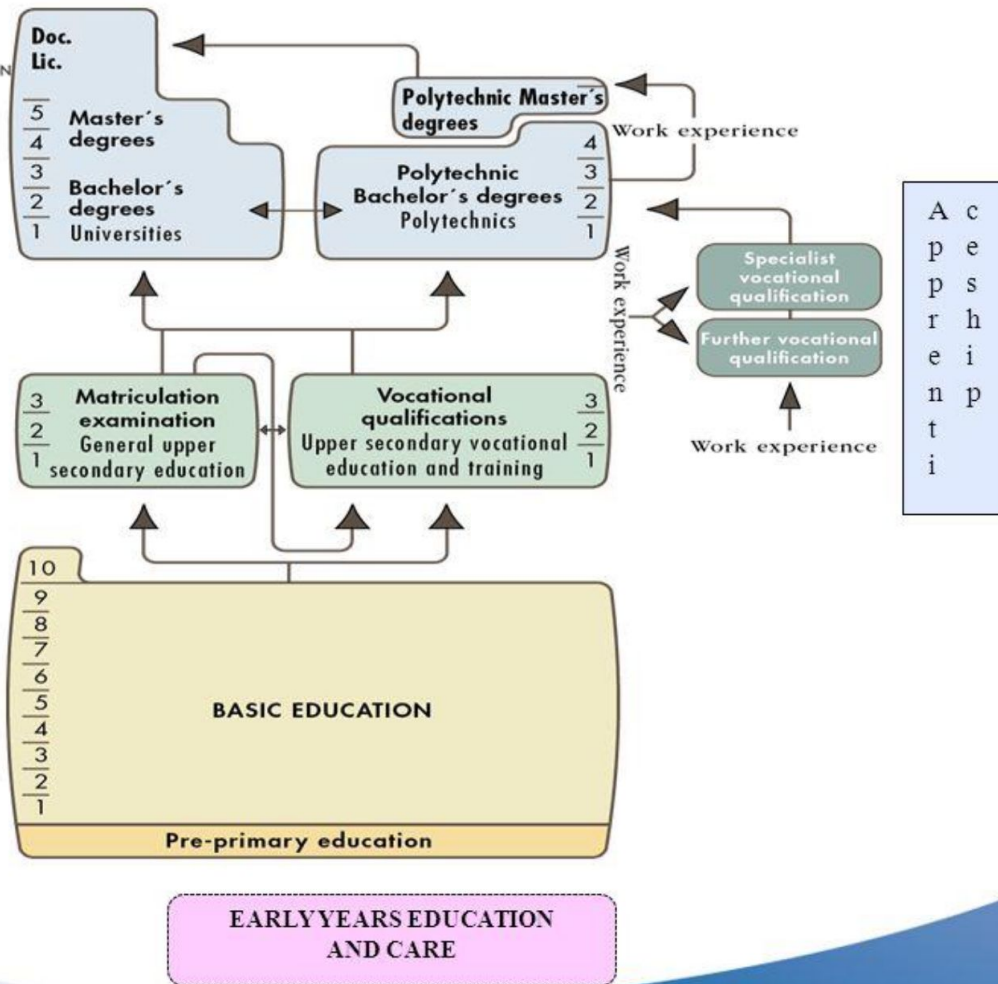
- Teachers
- Student welfare group
  - Nurse
  - Psychologist
  - Social worker
  - Principal
- Outside school entities





FINNISH NATIONAL  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Finnish Education System,**  
no dead-ends in the system



A c  
p e  
p s  
r h  
e i  
n p  
t i

***“There  
are no  
dead  
ends.”***



# Finnish Curriculum Standards





# Finnish national core curriculum

## General guidelines

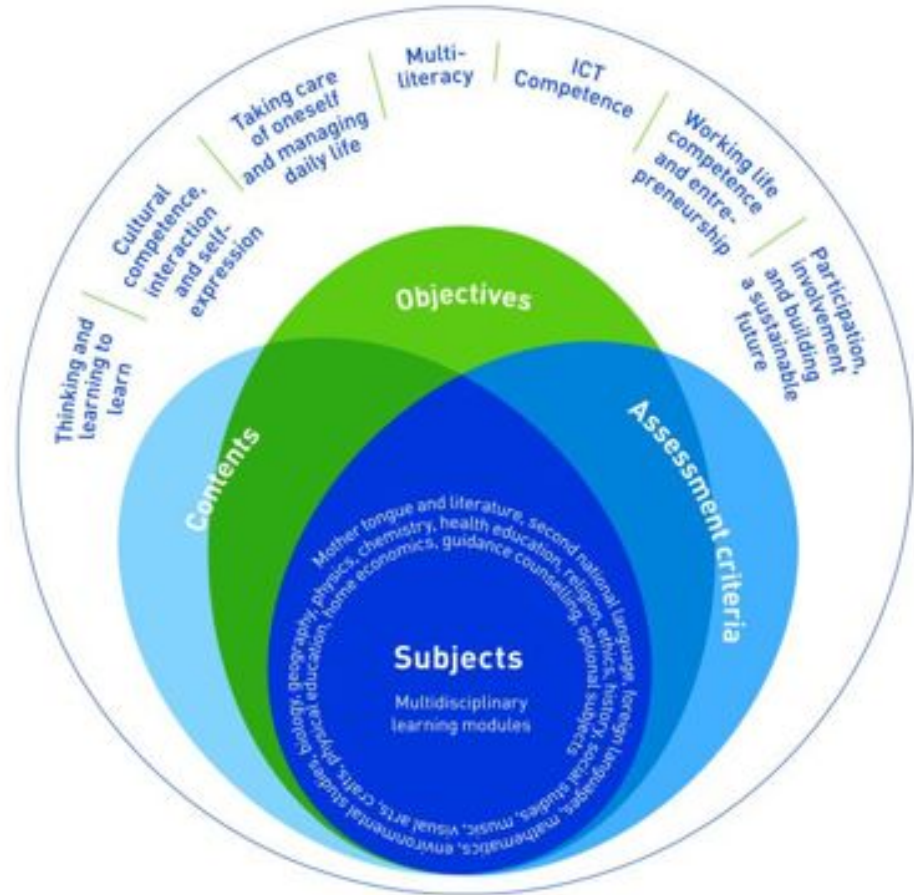
- School culture
- Missions and visions
- Assessment guidelines
- Support and welfare

## Subject specific guidelines

- Main task of the subject
- Transversal competences
- Competence-based goals
- Content-based goals

# Transversal Competencies

- T1. Thinking and Learning to Think
- T2. Cultural Competence, Interaction and Self-Expression
- T3. Taking Care of Oneself and Managing Daily Life
- T4. Multiliteracy
- T5. ICT Competence (Information and Communication Technology)
- T6. Working Life Competence and Entrepreneurship
- T7. Participation, Involvement and Building a Sustainable Future



Source: [www.oph.fi](http://www.oph.fi)

**High  
Trust**

+

**Teacher  
Autonomy**

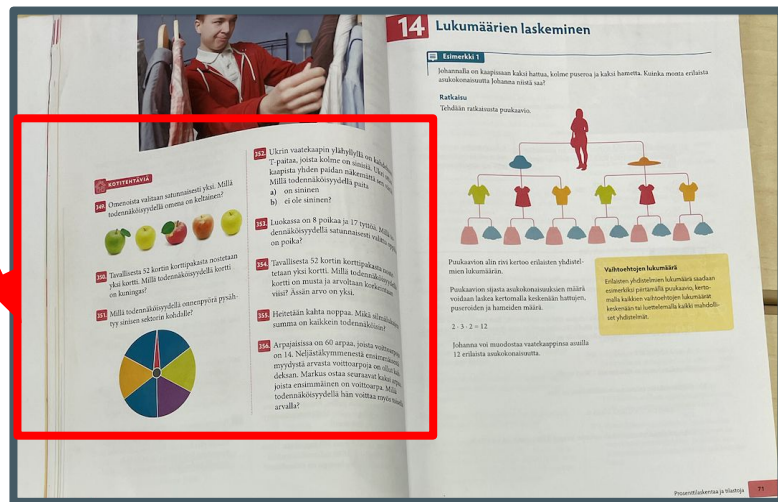
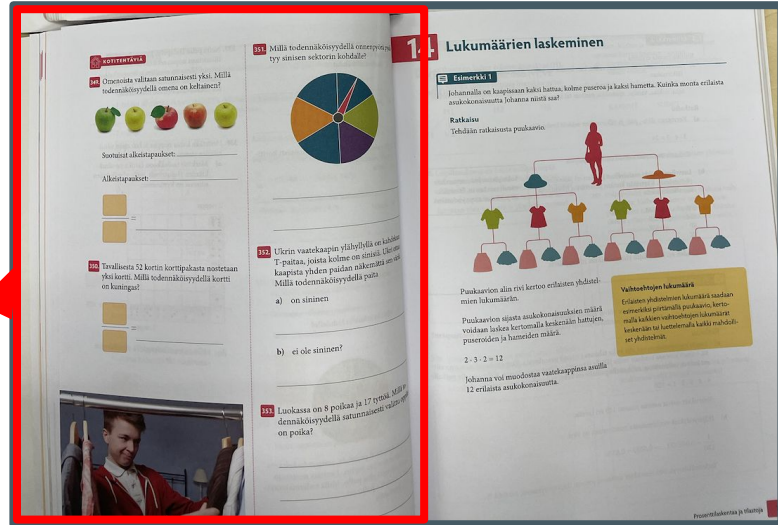
=

**No  
Teacher  
Evaluation  
System**

**No High  
Stakes  
Tests**

**No  
Teacher  
Recertifica-  
tion**

# Differentiation



# The Estonian System

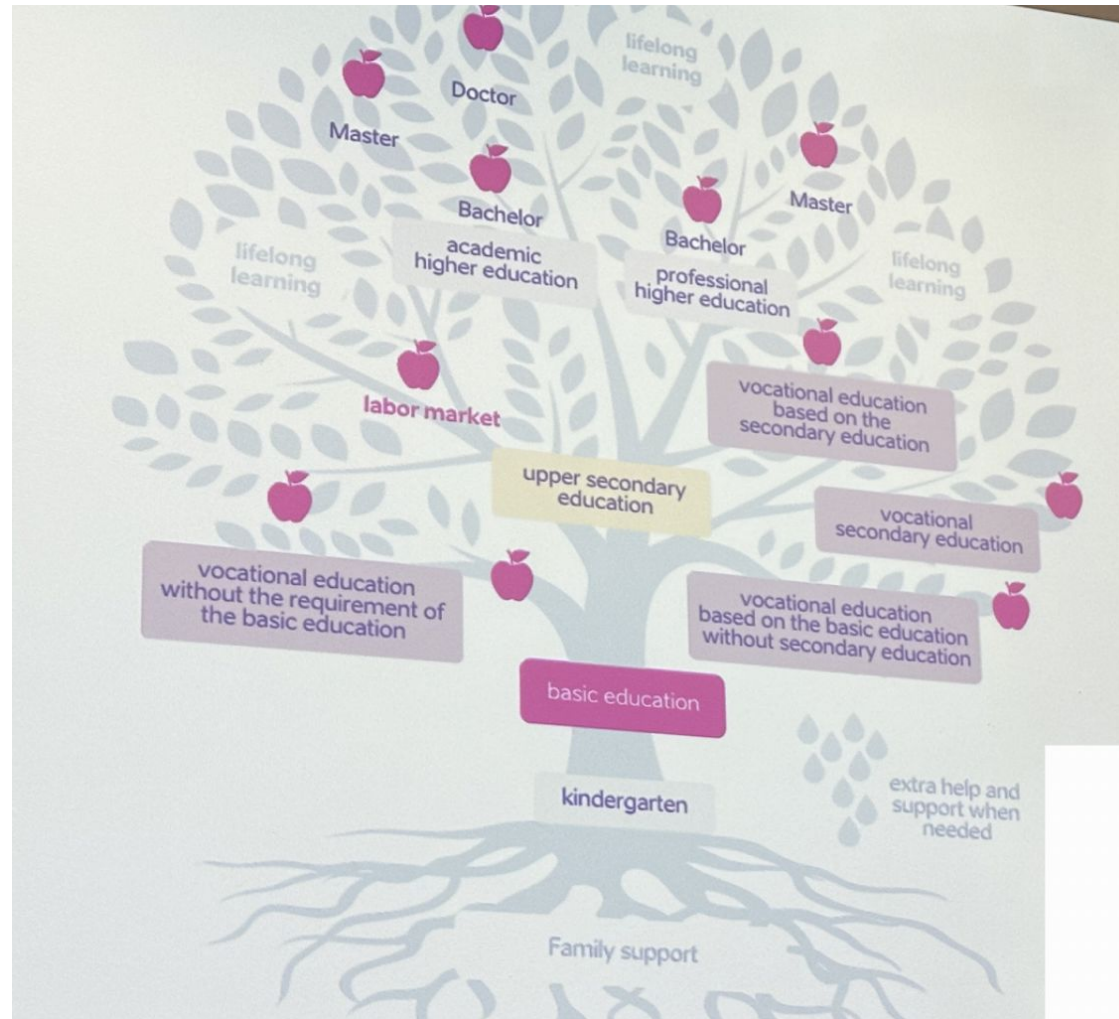




# Estonian Educational System

***“Too small to fail:  
Countries like Estonia  
are like wild animals  
constantly on the alert.  
You are forced to  
innovate - to do  
something that nobody  
else does.”***

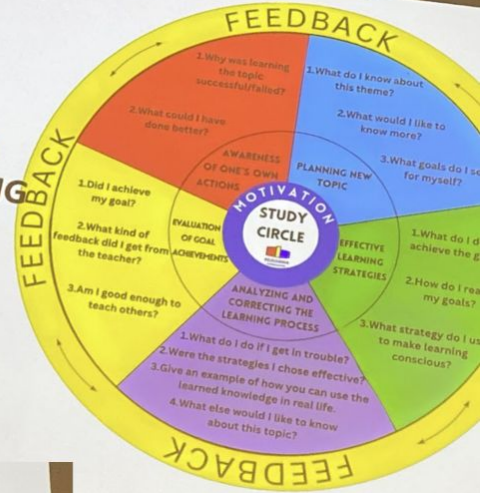
- Taavi Kotka  
Estonia's CIO 2013-2017



gets what are possible to used:



## BASIC AGREEMENT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING



Environments what we use:



# Educational System Highlights:

## FINLAND

- Rigorous teacher training
- High levels of teacher trust and autonomy
- No standardized testing
- Student independent
- Value all pathways and jobs
- Social justice is woven throughout curricula
- Safety and well-being
- Happiness

## ESTONIA

- Emphasis on technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship
- Equity focus
- High value placed on education from all stakeholders
- More competitive - like US
- Value traditional education (90%) over vocational (10%)
- Teacher shortages
- Phasing out Russian-speaking schools



# The Systems in Action





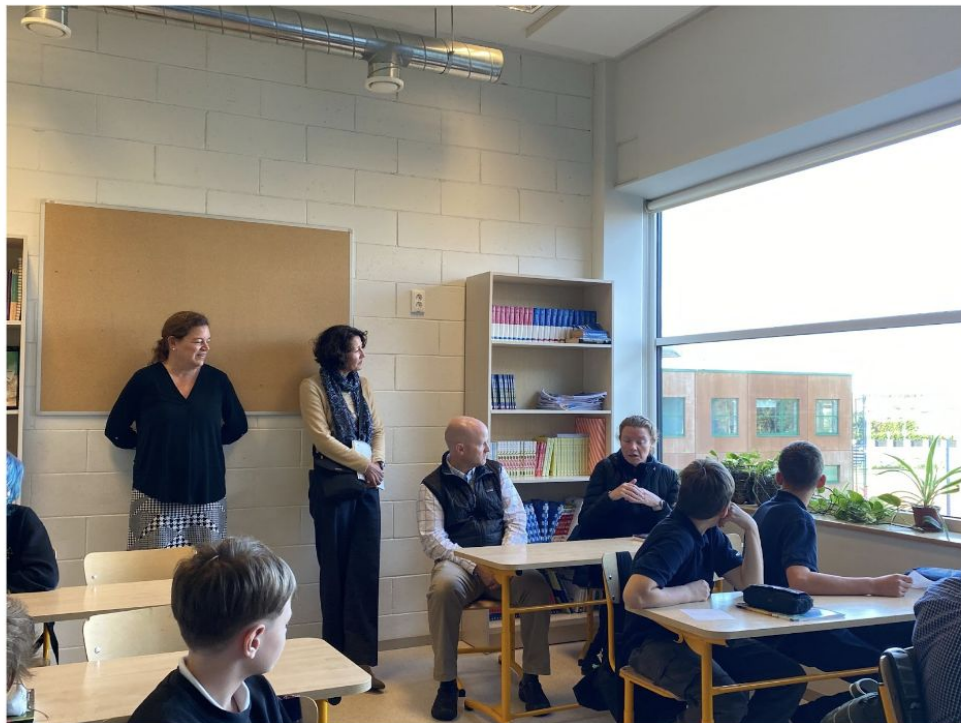




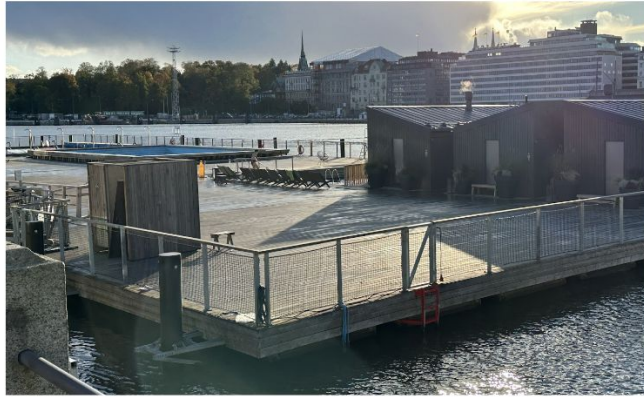
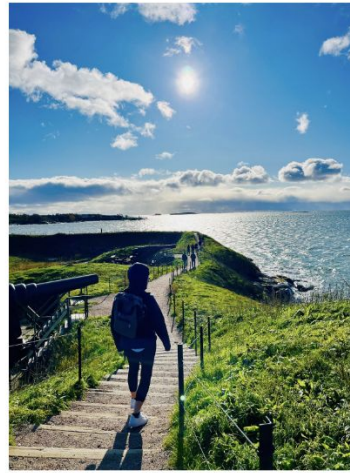
Finnish High School  
Classroom



Estonian High School  
Classroom







**FINLAND:** Hosted by local educator, experienced local sauna culture, downtown Helsinki



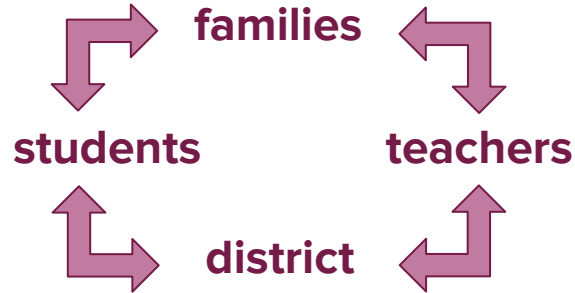
**ESTONIA:** Estonia Ministry of Education, View of Tallinn, Olde Town  
Estonia

# Some Key Takeaways

1. Calm, clean learning environments
2. The impact of high trust between parents, kids, and school
3. The power of focusing on executive functioning and life skills in the early grades.
4. “There are no dead ends.”
5. Integrated, multidisciplinary curriculum
6. Early learning in second and third languages
7. Heavily centralized system - standards, salaries, school funding
8. Massachusetts rivals Finland in results.

# What Parts of the Finnish and Estonian Systems are Transferable to Natick?

**A consistent focus  
on building trust**



## **Curricularly**

1. Teach multidisciplinary units in early grades. Increase collaboration across disciplines at secondary levels.
2. Add world language instruction at earlier grades
3. Connect *Progress of Graduate* competencies to core curricular competencies and standards.



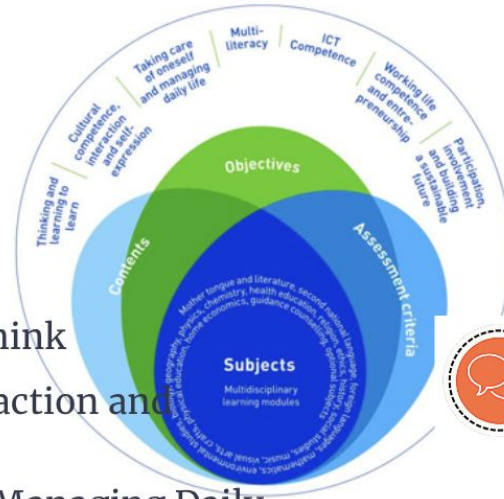
# **What Parts of the Finnish and Estonian Systems Are Transferable to Natick?**

## **Social-Emotionally**

1. Increase the shared leadership to support all functions of a schools success.
2. Provide students with more opportunity for agency at younger ages.
3. Embed daily experiences that support executive functioning skill development
4. Consider adding vocational and life skills at early ages to support the whole child.
5. Normalize vocational training as a career path in the post-secondary process.
6. Minimize sensory input and reduce distractions.
7. Invest in the idea that “there are no dead ends!”

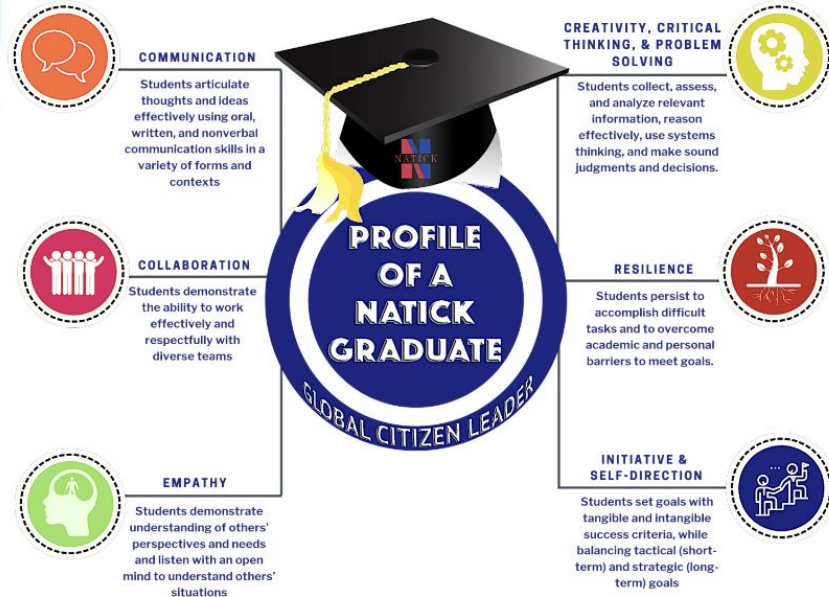
# Transversal Competencies

- T1. Thinking and Learning to Think
- T2. Cultural Competence, Interaction and Self-Expression
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- T5. ICT Competence (Information and Communication Technology)
- T6. Working Life Competence and Entrepreneurship
- T7. Participation, Involvement and Building a Sustainable Future



Source: [www.opf.fi](http://www.opf.fi)

# Natick Profile of a Graduate



**Thank you  
for this  
amazing  
opportunity!**



---

**ITEM TITLE:** Findings of an Entry Plan - High School Principal Josepha Blocker

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

---

**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Type</b>
Findings of an Entry Plan	Entry_Plan_Presentation_for_School_Committee.pdf	Cover Memo

**Josepha Blocker**

*Principal, Natick High School*

*Entry Plan, School Year 2023 - 2024*





# The Entry Plan Process



# Entry Plan Goals

**Allow the Community Time for Purposeful Reflection**

*Transition is a natural time to do this*

**Build Trusting Collaborative Relationships**

*Start my relationships by listening.*

**Understand the Culture, Values, Goals and Traditions** *that are currently in place at NHS.*

**Review the Structures, Policies and Decision-Making Procedures** *in place at NHS.*

**Build a Comprehensive Picture of the Current Strengths and Areas for Growth at NHS**

*Begin the process of creating school improvement goals that build on current strengths and honor the perspectives of the full school community.*

# Entry Plan Calendar

04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
Document and Data Review								
Visits to NHS								
		Survey Caregivers, Students and Staff						
		Group and 1-on-1 meetings with staff / students / caregivers / community groups						
					Taking Stock of School Life			
						Synthesize Data		Share Findings



# April 2023 - June 2023

- Meeting with Dr. Nolin
- 8th Grade Step Up Night
- Shadowed the Deans/Vice-Principals in May
- Met with Leadership Team in May
- Presented the Entry Plan to the Faculty in June at one of the last Faculty Meetings



# July 2023 - August 2023

- **1-on-1 Meetings** (*Department Heads, Vice Principals, Deans, many Central Office members, any interested faculty*)
- Presented the **State of the Union** data
- **Parent/Caregiver Coffee, 1-on-1 meetings** with parents by request
- **Surveys to parents, students, staff**

**Entry Plan Student Survey**  
Josepha Blocker, Principal  
23 - 24 School Year

**Entry Plan Caregiver Survey**  
Josepha Blocker, Principal  
23 - 24 School Year

Caregiver Survey - NHS Entry Plan for Josepha Blocker

**Entry Plan Staff Survey**  
Josepha Blocker, Principal  
23 - 24 School Year

Staff Survey - NHS Entry Plan for Josepha Blocker

Thank you for completing this survey which will help me set goals for our work together. The information you share here is confidential, won't be attributed to you, and will only be shared in aggregated form.

[jblocker@natickps.org](mailto:jblocker@natickps.org) [Switch account](#)

Not shared

Name (Optional)

Your answer

**RSVP for Natick High School Caregiver Coffee**

# Opening of School 2023

## 9th Grade Orientation



## Redhawk Fest!



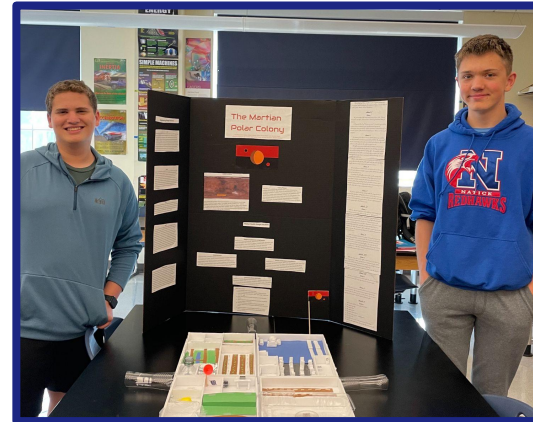
## New Staff Orientation





# Fall 2023

- Developed School Improvement Plan
- Created a Steering Committee for the DESE Inclusive Academy Grant to begin implementation
- Visited PLCs, classrooms, clubs, activities, plays, concerts, athletics
- Met with Principals Roundtable, School Council, Principal's Advisory Class, Class Advisors





# Entry Plan Takeaways

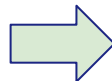




# Academics

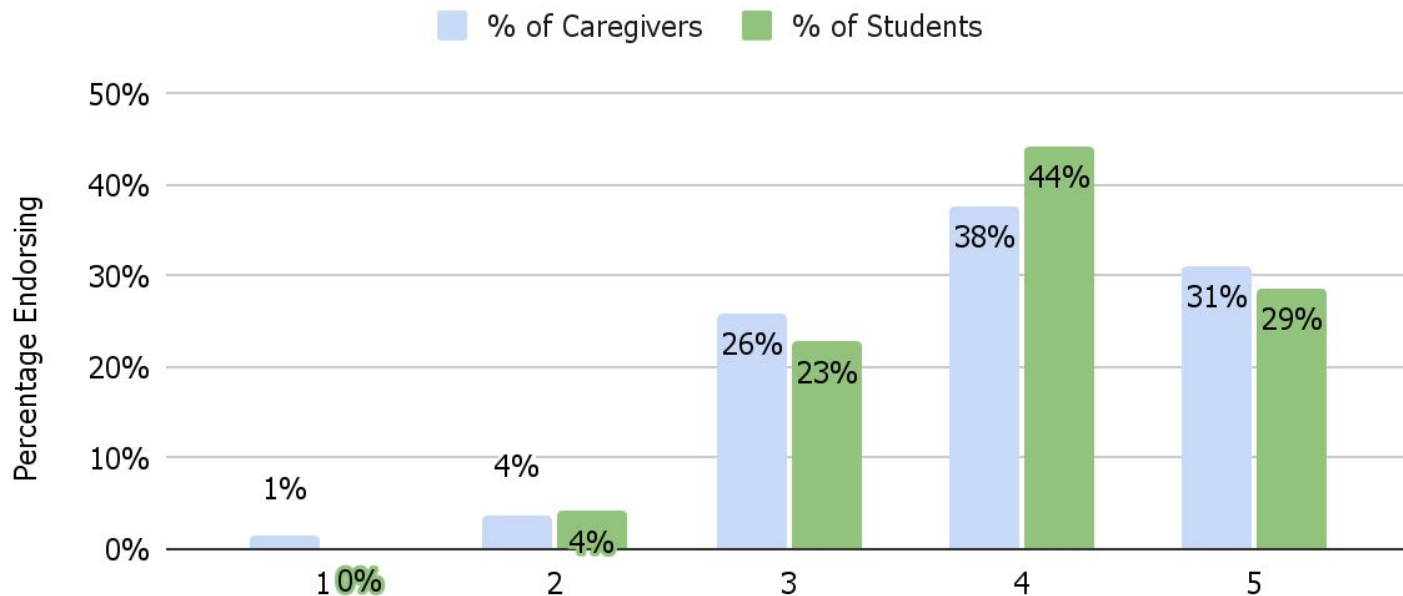


# CHALLENGING COURSEWORK

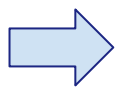


Caregivers and **students** largely feel that students are appropriately challenged.

My NHS student (for parents/caregivers)/I (for students) feel appropriately challenged.



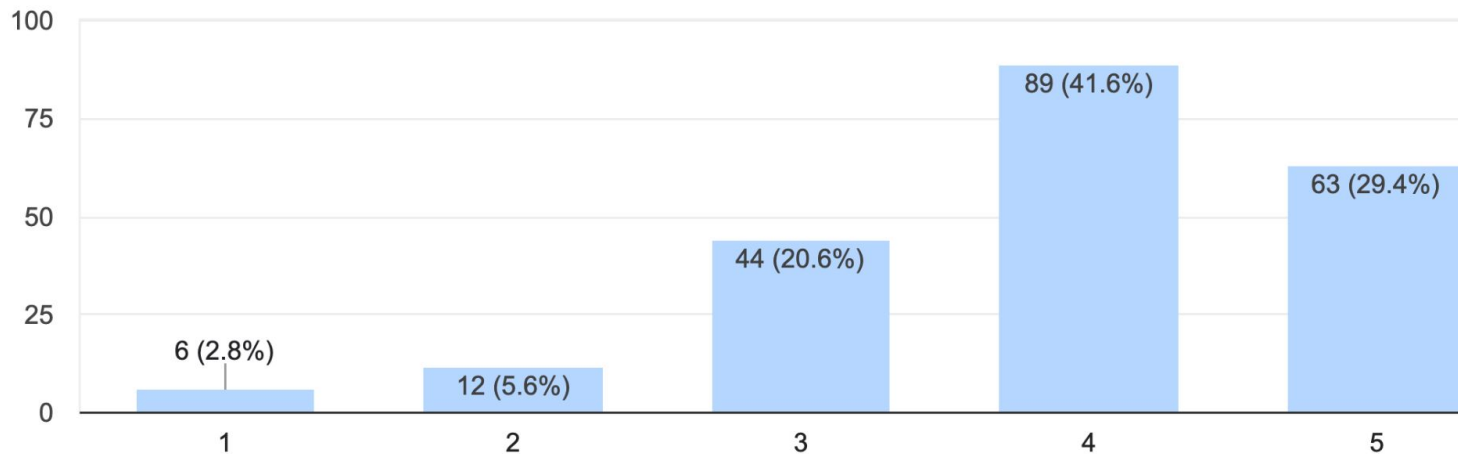
# PREPAREDNESS



*Caregivers largely feel confident that their student is prepared for post-secondary life.*

I am confident that my NHS student(s) will be prepared for their "next step" after graduating from NHS.

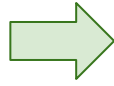
214 responses



*70% of caregivers are confident or very confident that their student will be prepared for their next step. Fewer than 10% said that they felt they were not confident their student was prepared.*

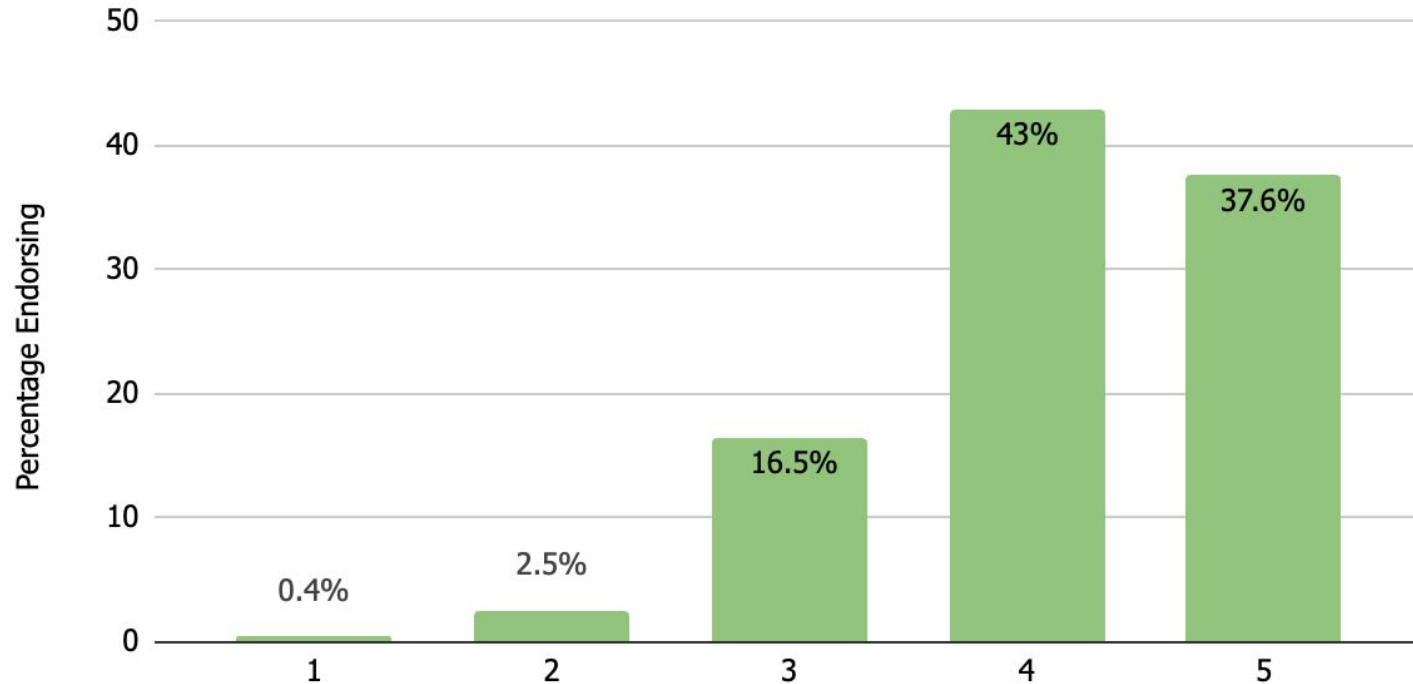


# ACADEMIC HELP



*Students largely feel they can access academic help if they need it.*

Academic help is available and easy to access if I need it.

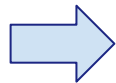




Belonging

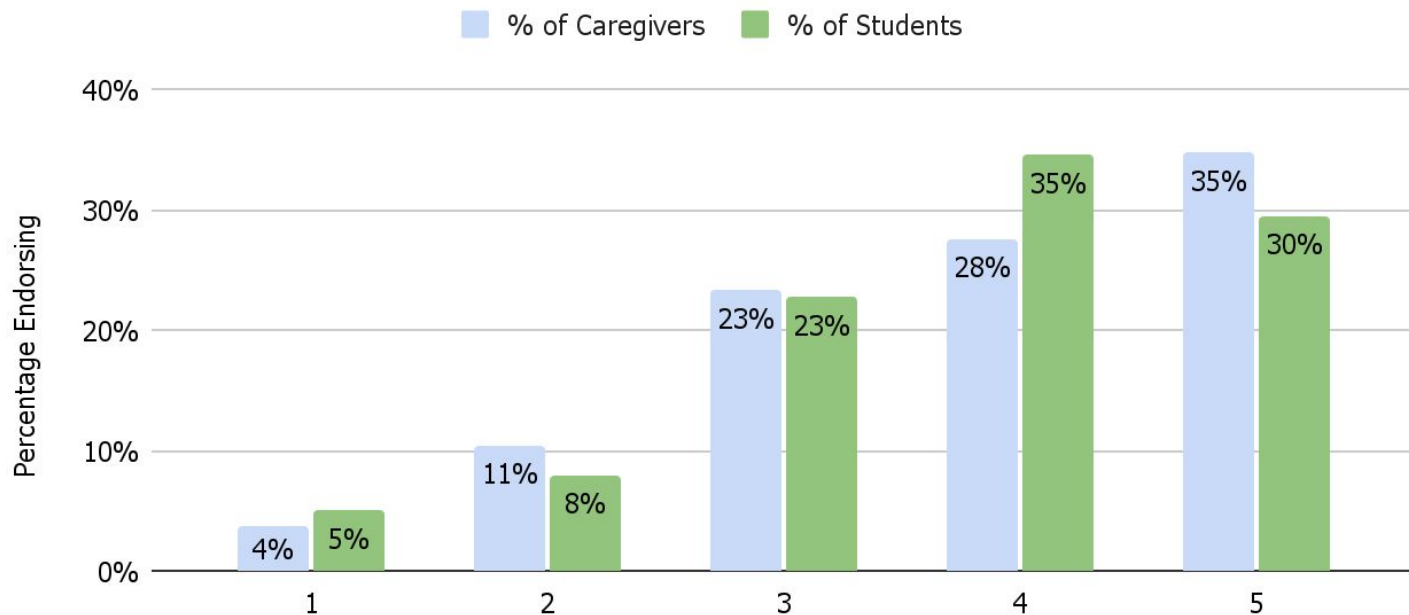


# TRUSTED ADULT

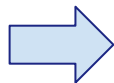


*A large portion of students have a trusted adult.*

There is at least one adult at NHS that my student/I could turn to if my student/I needed to talk about something important.

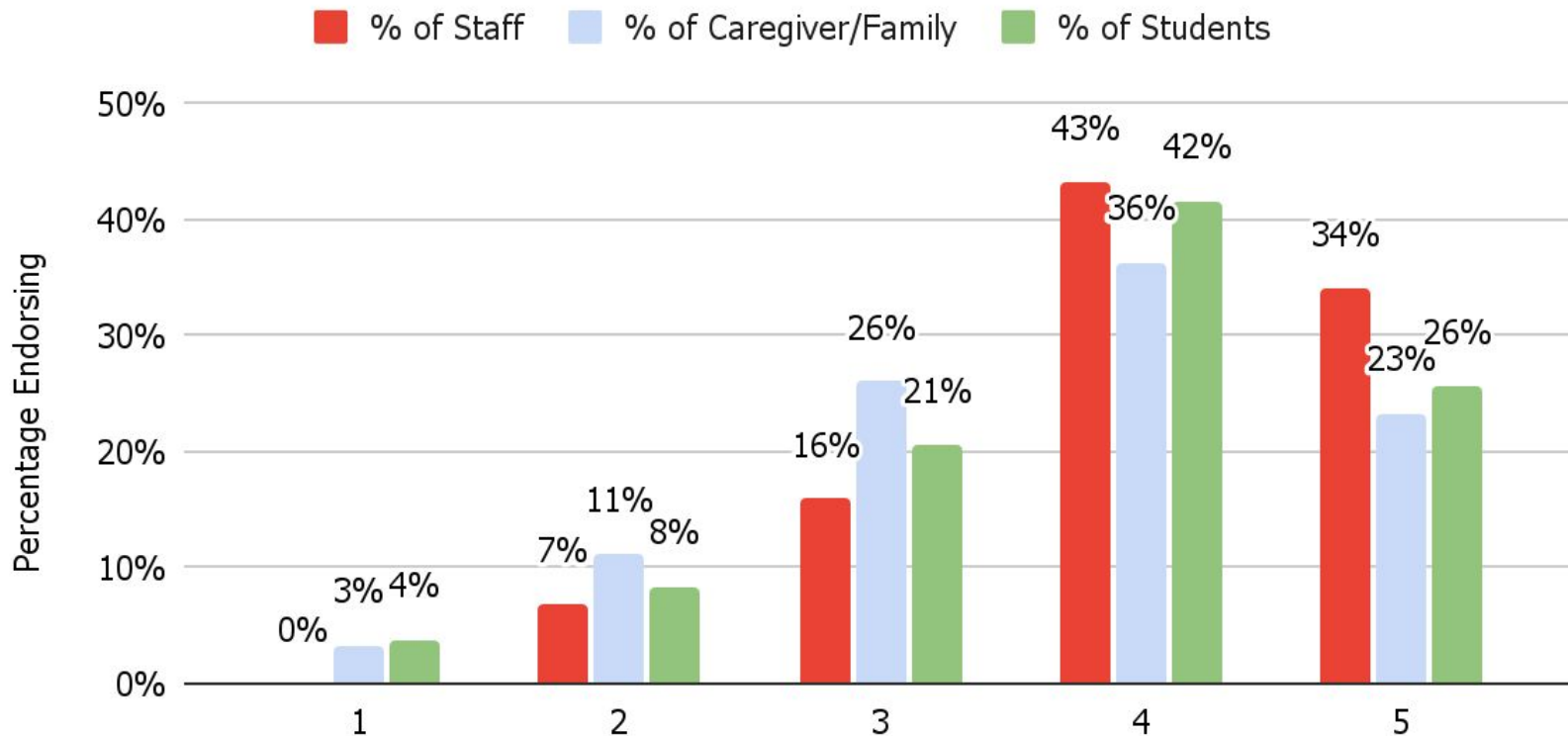


# BELONGING



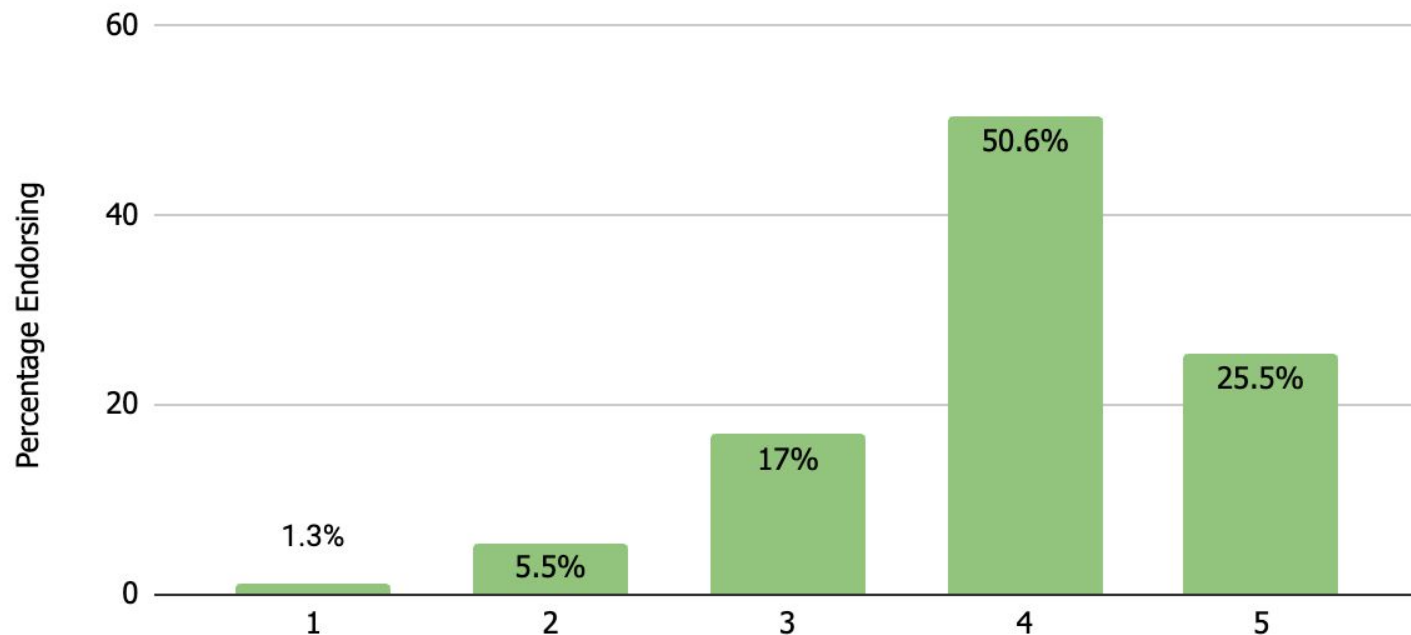
*A large portion of staff, students and families feel a sense of belonging.*

I/my family feel a sense of belonging at NHS.

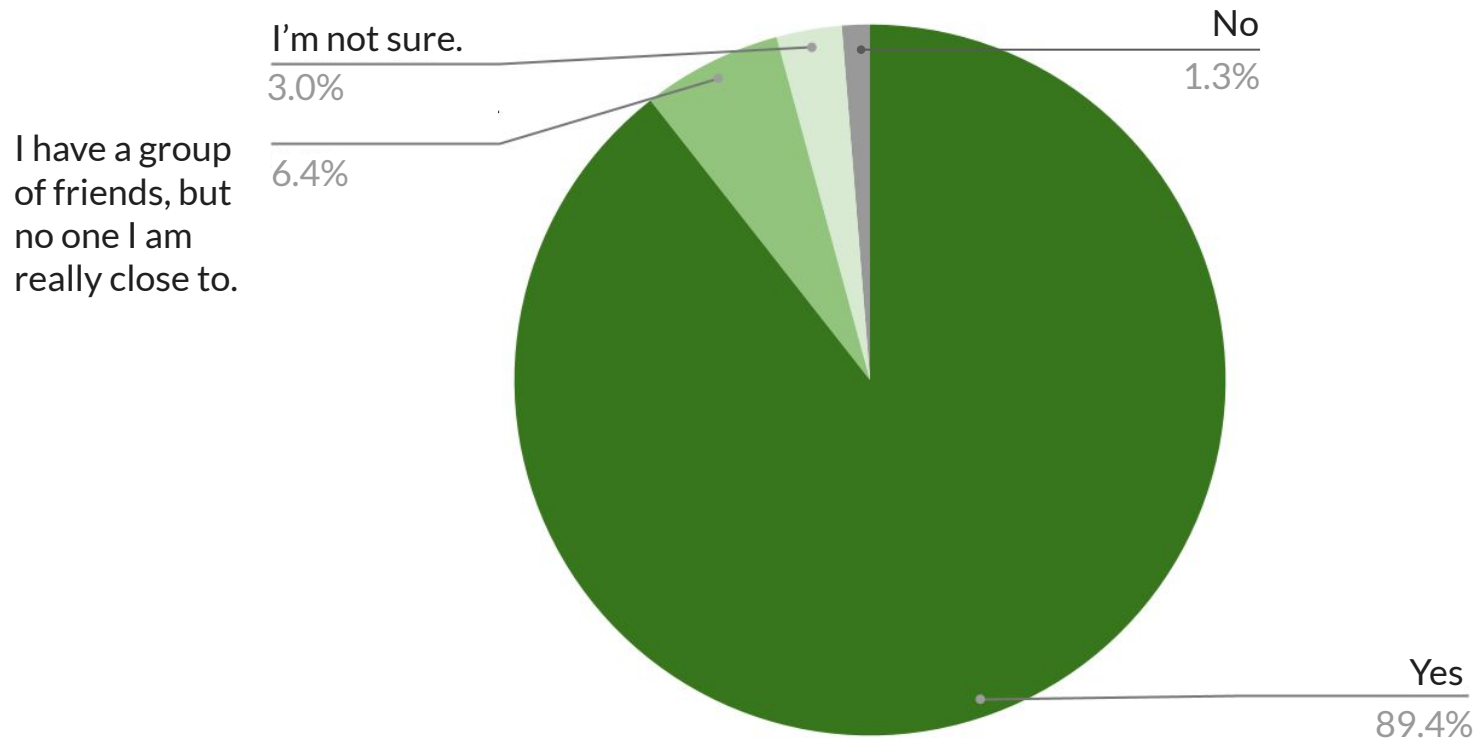


# STUDENTS: FEELING CARED FOR BY STAFF

The NHS staff (teachers, guidance, etc.) care about me as a student and a person.



# I HAVE AT LEAST ONE CLOSE FRIEND.

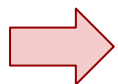




## Other Information



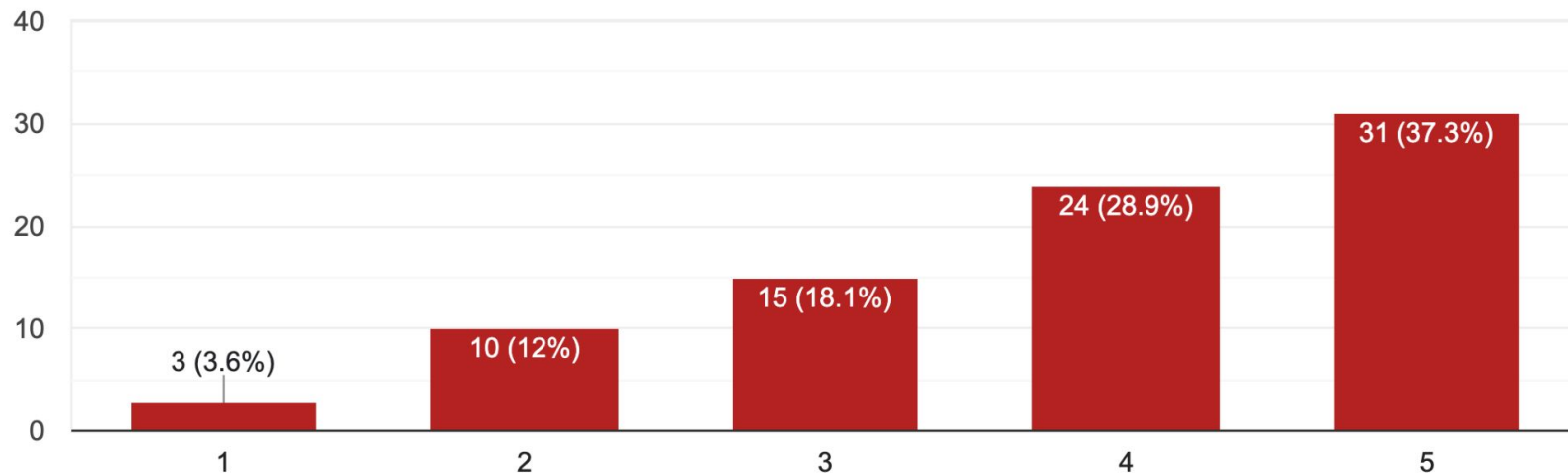
# PLCs



*The staff really value PLCs and feel they are effective at improving practice.*

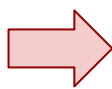
My PLC(s) is effective in improving my practice.

83 responses

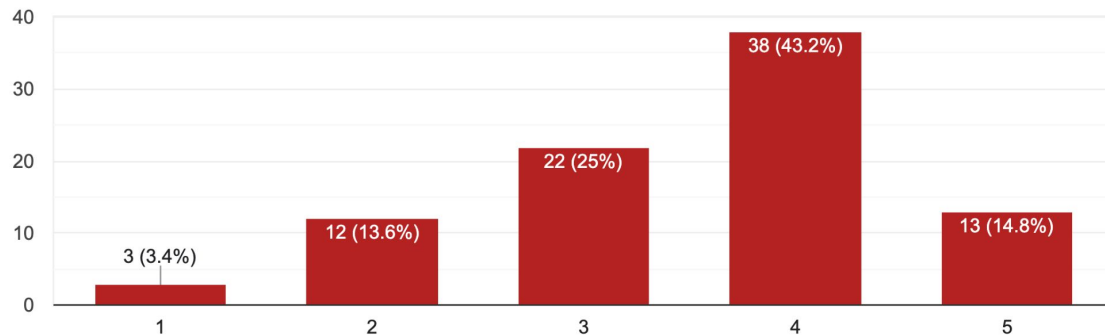




# COMMUNICATION

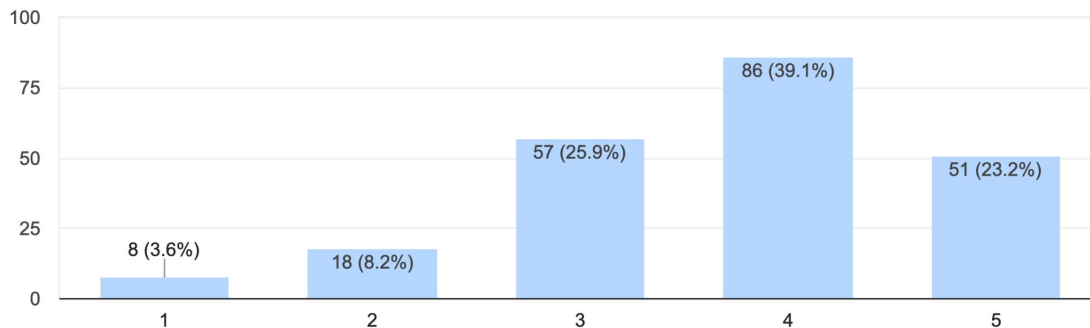


*A large portion of both staff and caregivers feel positively about communication.*



## **Staff:**

*Communication from NHS administration is timely and informs my practice.*



## **Caregivers:**

*Communication from NHS is timely and effective.*



## Other Conclusions



# WHAT'S GOING WELL

## The Faculty

- Value time collaborating in PLCs
- Generally feel supported by administration

## Resources

- Rich opportunities: extracurriculars, athletics, wide variety of challenging courses
- Beautiful facilities
- Staff feel that they have resources that they need (materials, supplies, etc.)



# WHAT'S GOING WELL

## A Strong Community

- Strong sense of pride amongst students, families, the staff, and the community.
- The staff like and respect each other and are really invested in the school's success.
- The staff like and appreciate the kids.
- Students feel NHS is generally welcoming, accepting and inclusive.
- Dedicated, highly-qualified faculty
- Dedicated, invested parent community
- Vast majority of students feel that the staff care about them.
- Most students have an adult at school that they trust.



# WHAT'S GOING WELL

## Other Positive Factors

- Students and their caregivers feel students are challenged appropriately.
- The students and caregivers appreciate that there is a “mix” of kids.
- Students who advocate find what they need.
- Students like the freedom of “priv.”
- The majority of caregivers feel that their students are prepared for post-secondary life.

# AREAS FOR GROWTH

## Communication with Caregivers

- Website needs a redesign
- Improve the organization of the newsletter
- Greater access to the same information as students on upcoming events and post-secondary planning
- Earlier communication from teachers when students are struggling.

## Communication with Staff

- Would like to hear about things going on with students earlier.

# AREAS FOR GROWTH

## Belonging

- Caregivers and student expressed a need for greater mental health support
- Caregivers and students said that we could do more to educate students in preventing microaggressions, especially related to race and anti-semitism.
- Some caregivers cited a desire for more schoolwide activities for earlier grades
- Caregivers expressed concern that students who are quiet and/or not exceptional get lost.
- The staff want more staff social gatherings!

## A Few Other Factors

- More parent support with post-secondary planning
- The students wanted school to start later and want their phones back.

# AREAS FOR GROWTH

## “Students’ Soft Skills”

- Staff and families mentioned that students are in need of support in certain life-skills
  - Conflict resolution
  - Financial literacy
  - Executive functioning
  - How to study

## Behaviors

- **Staff** → Students wandering, cell phones, general respect, attendance
- **Caregivers** → Discrimination and academic integrity
- **Students** → Bullying
- **Everyone** → Substance use, especially vaping in the bathrooms.



# IN SUMMARY

- NHS is an **amazing school** with terrific **resources** and offerings in and outside the classroom, and a **dedicated, highly qualified** staff who are invested in kids.
- Many students and families feel a **strong sense of belonging**; some may feel lost or unseen.
- There is **support available**, but **not all students access** those resources.
- We have a **goal of being inclusive** and we have work to do to realize this goal.

# IN SUMMARY

- **Kindness, transparency and follow-through** are really important qualities in your principal.
- We need to work on some **student soft-skills** and **addressing some behaviors**.
- **Mental health, vaping and substance use** are issues for our students and need increased attention.
- **NHS communication practices** generally serve staff and caregivers, but there are **notable areas where we could improve**.
- Some caregivers need more support on the **post-secondary process**.

THANK YOU FOR THE WARM WELCOME AND ...



... THE CHANCE TO LEAD THIS AMAZING SCHOOL!

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**ITEM TITLE:** FY25 Budget Update  
**DATE:**  
**ITEM TYPE:**  
**ITEM SUMMARY:**  
**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**  
**RECOMMENDATION:**

---

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Description    File Name		Type
FY25 Budget Summary	3_Natick_Public_Schools_Preliminary_FY25_Budget_Summary_February_5__2024_(2).pdf	Cover Memo



# **Natick Public Schools Preliminary FY25 Budget Summary**

February 5, 2024



# ENROLLMENT

## Natick Public Schools Cohort Survival Only - THREE Year Avg - Post COVID Shutdown Year

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Live Births	417	390	394	397	364	356	380	360	360	360	360	360
School Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33
Multiplier 3 Yr Avg	10/1/2021	10/1/2022	10/1/2023									
Actuals												
PK	0.3227	132	138	124	128	117	115	123	116	116	116	116
K	0.9385	406	356	359	373	342	334	357	338	338	338	357
1	1.0360	359	418	354	372	386	354	346	369	350	350	350
2	1.0054	382	368	426	356	374	388	356	348	371	352	352
3	1.0164	421	395	371	433	362	380	394	362	354	378	358
4	0.9885	394	420	392	367	428	358	376	390	357	350	373
5	1.0149	413	405	429	398	372	434	363	381	396	363	355
6	0.9873	409	411	404	424	393	367	429	358	376	391	358
7	0.9982	434	404	412	403	423	392	367	428	358	376	390
8	1.0152	412	442	414	418	409	429	398	372	435	363	381
9	0.9939	394	420	433	411	416	407	427	396	370	432	361
10	1.0116	384	395	427	438	416	421	412	432	400	374	437
11	1.0116	387	380	381	432	443	421	425	416	437	405	379
12	1.0034	381	394	378	382	433	445	422	427	418	438	406
Pre-K		132	138	124	128	117	115	123	116	116	116	116
k-4		1962	1957	1902	1900	1891	1814	1829	1807	1770	1767	1771
5-8		1668	1662	1659	1643	1597	1623	1556	1540	1564	1492	1484
9-12		1546	1589	1619	1664	1708	1693	1686	1670	1625	1649	1583
k-12		5176	5208	5180	5207	5197	5130	5071	5017	4959	4908	4838
Total All		5308	5346	5304	5335	5314	5245	5194	5133	5075	5024	4954
Change				-42	31	-21	-70	-51				

Calculation based on cohort survival method - HOUSING GROWTH NOT YET INCLUDED

Live Birth Data from Town Clerk 2017 forward, 2023 births forward is estimated, 273 reported thru 9/30

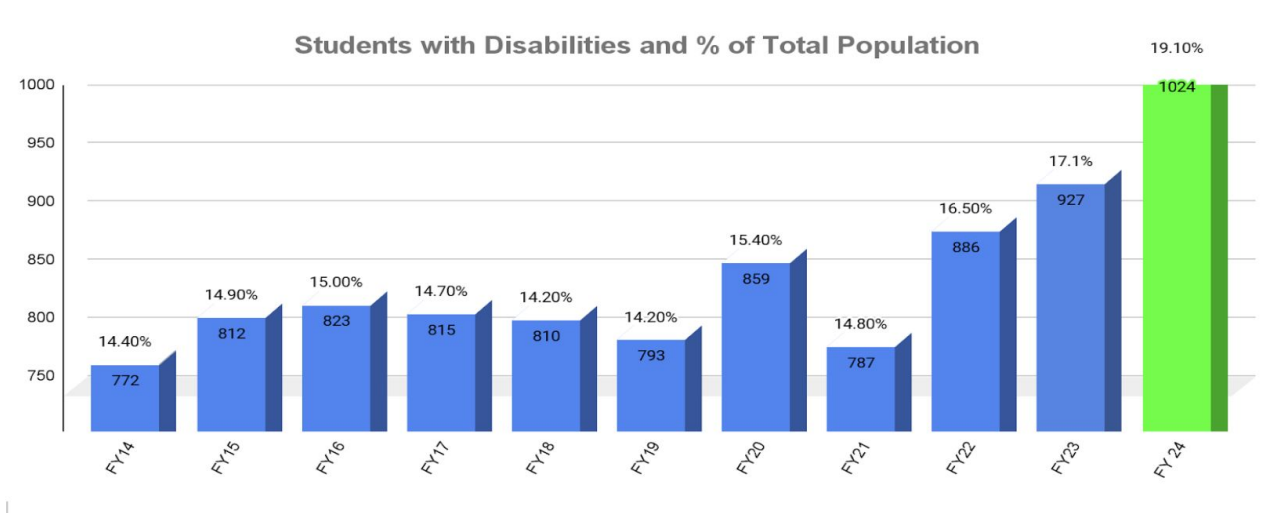
children born, but not yet enrolled

Shaded birth rates and enrollment projection data based on estimated births;

Multiplier is a THREE year average from most recent history available, COVID year and prior not factored in



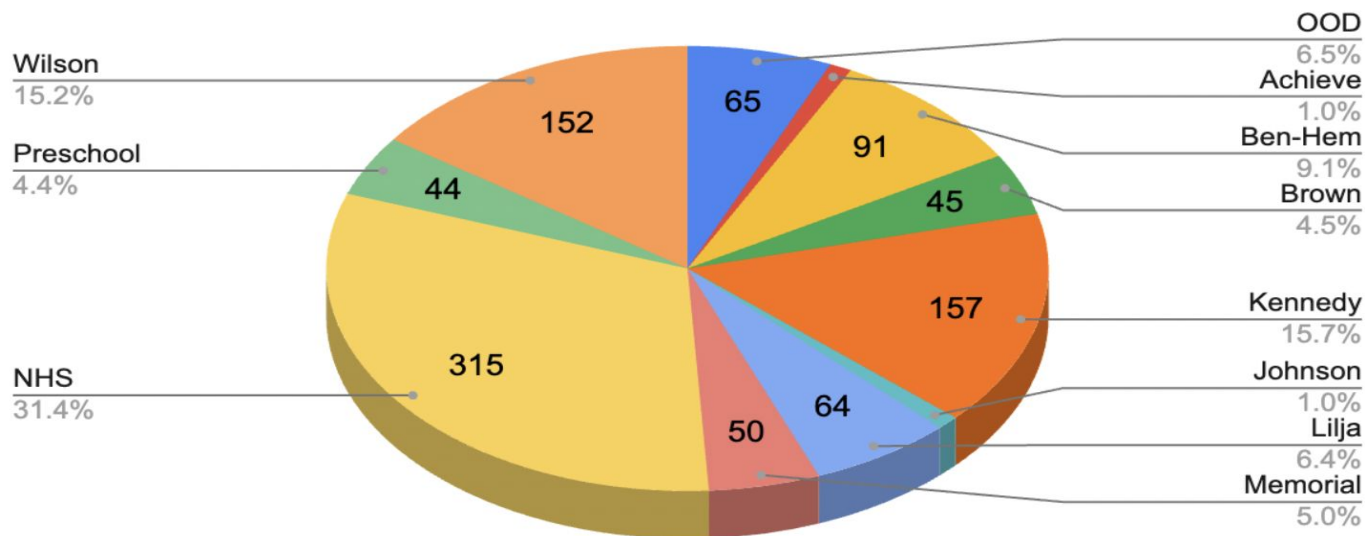
# SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT



Statewide: 19.4



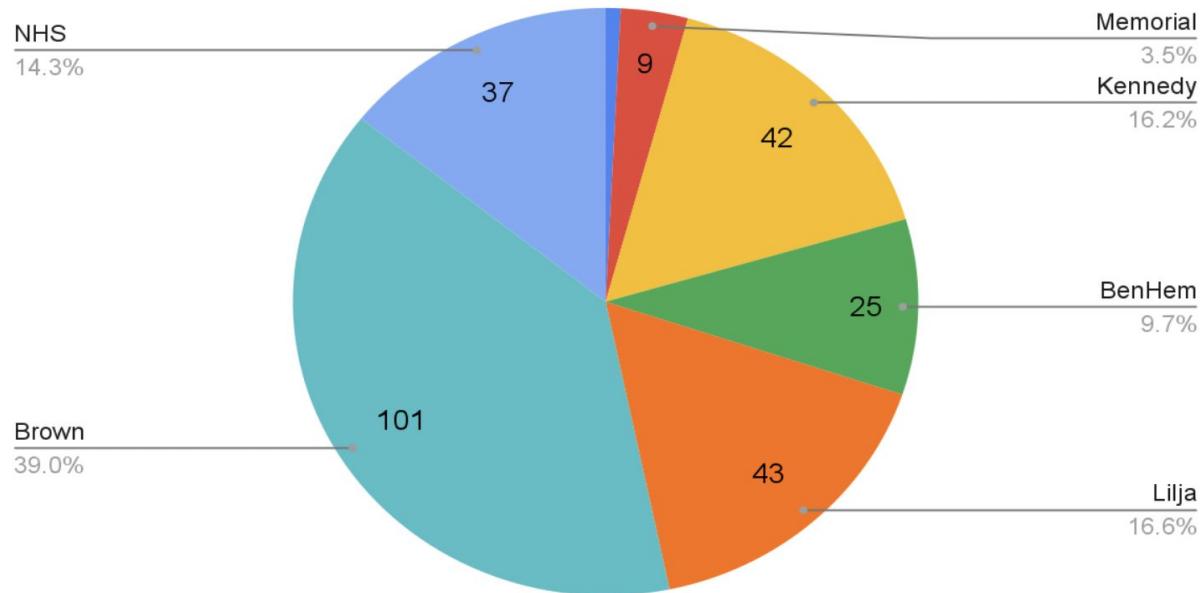
## Special Education Population by School





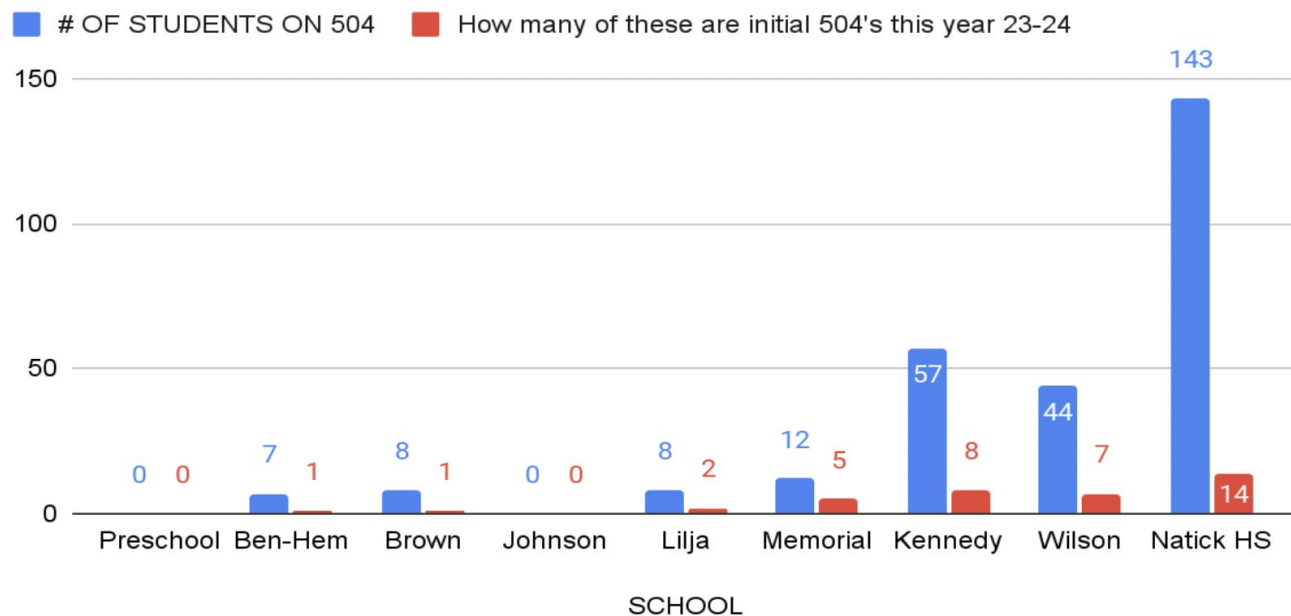


## 23-24 ACTIVE EL STUDENTS; TOTAL=259





## 2023-24 504 Plan Info: Total Plans=281 to date



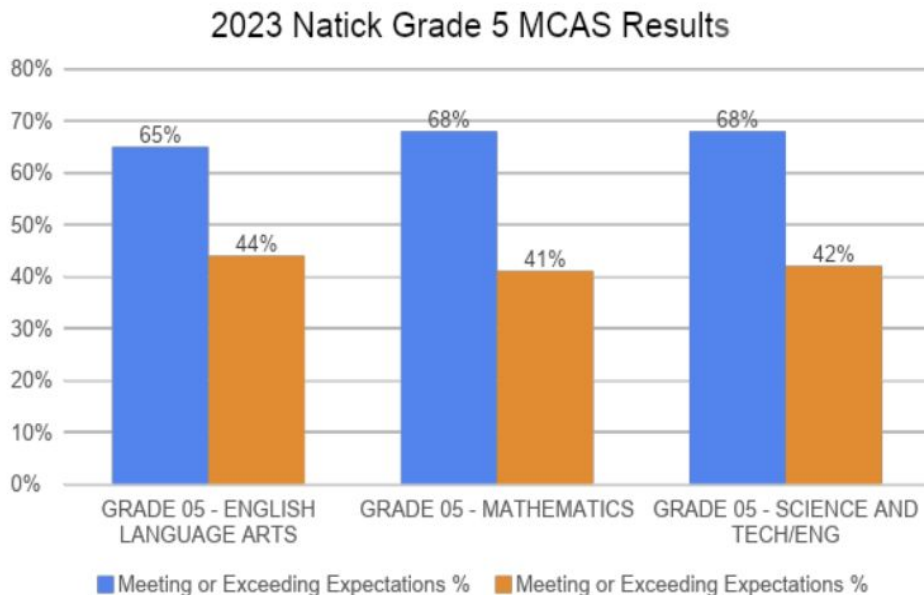


# McKinney-Vento 2020-2024

YEAR	20-21`	21-22	22-23	23-24
Population	41	43	45	65



# GRADE 5 MCAS 2023



Grade 5 is the first standardized MCAS Test which covers Math, ELA and Science, commonly represents the culmination of elementary school.

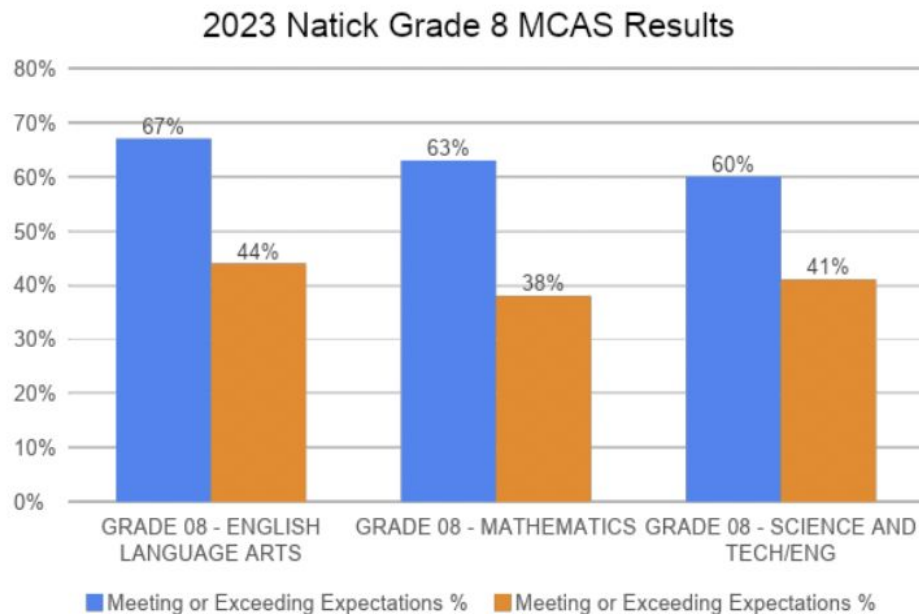
Grade 5 students scored:

- 47.7% higher in ELA
- 65.9% higher in Math
- 61.9% higher in Science

than the state average in the combined Meeting or Exceeding Expectations category.



# GRADE 8 MCAS 2023



Grade 8 is the second standardized MCAS Test which covers Math, ELA and Science, commonly represents the culmination of middle school.

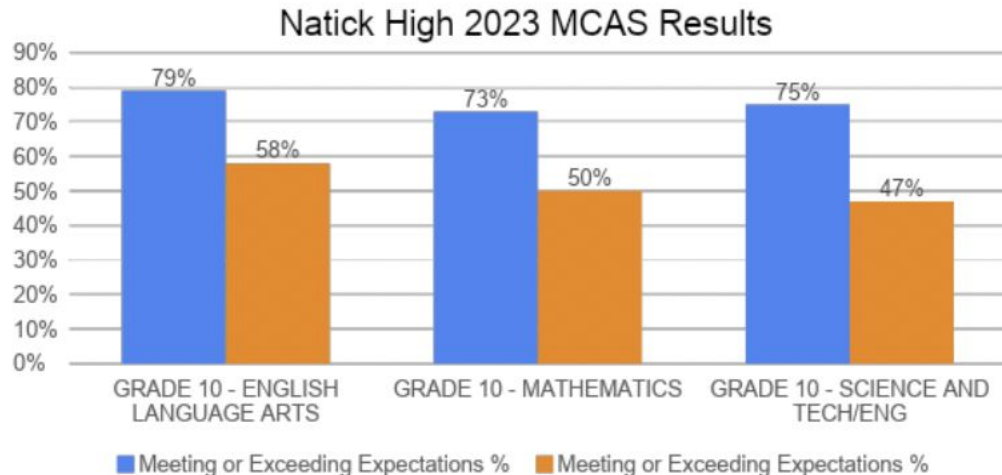
Grade 8 students scored:

- 52.3% higher in ELA
- 65.8% higher in Math
- 46.3% higher in Science

than the state average in the combined Meeting or Exceeding Expectations category.



# GRADE 10 MCAS 2023



**Note:** "Partially Meeting Expectations" scores are good enough for students to graduate provided they continue to take advancing courses in Grades 11 & 12.

Grade 10 Students will be given 5 opportunities before their Class June Graduation to retake the test to achieve a passing score. **About 96% of NHS students graduate in 4 years, about 97% in five years.**

Grade 10 MCAS is required for Graduation.

Grade 10 students scored:

- 36.2% higher in ELA
- 46.0% higher in Math
- 59.6% higher in Science

than the state average in the combined Meeting or Exceeding Expectations category.

NHS students that score proficient or advanced on the all facets of Grade 10 exam will be considered well prepared for a 4-Year State College or University

[https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement\\_level.aspx?lkid=32&orgcode=01980000&orgtypecode=5&](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?lkid=32&orgcode=01980000&orgtypecode=5&)



# FY25 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

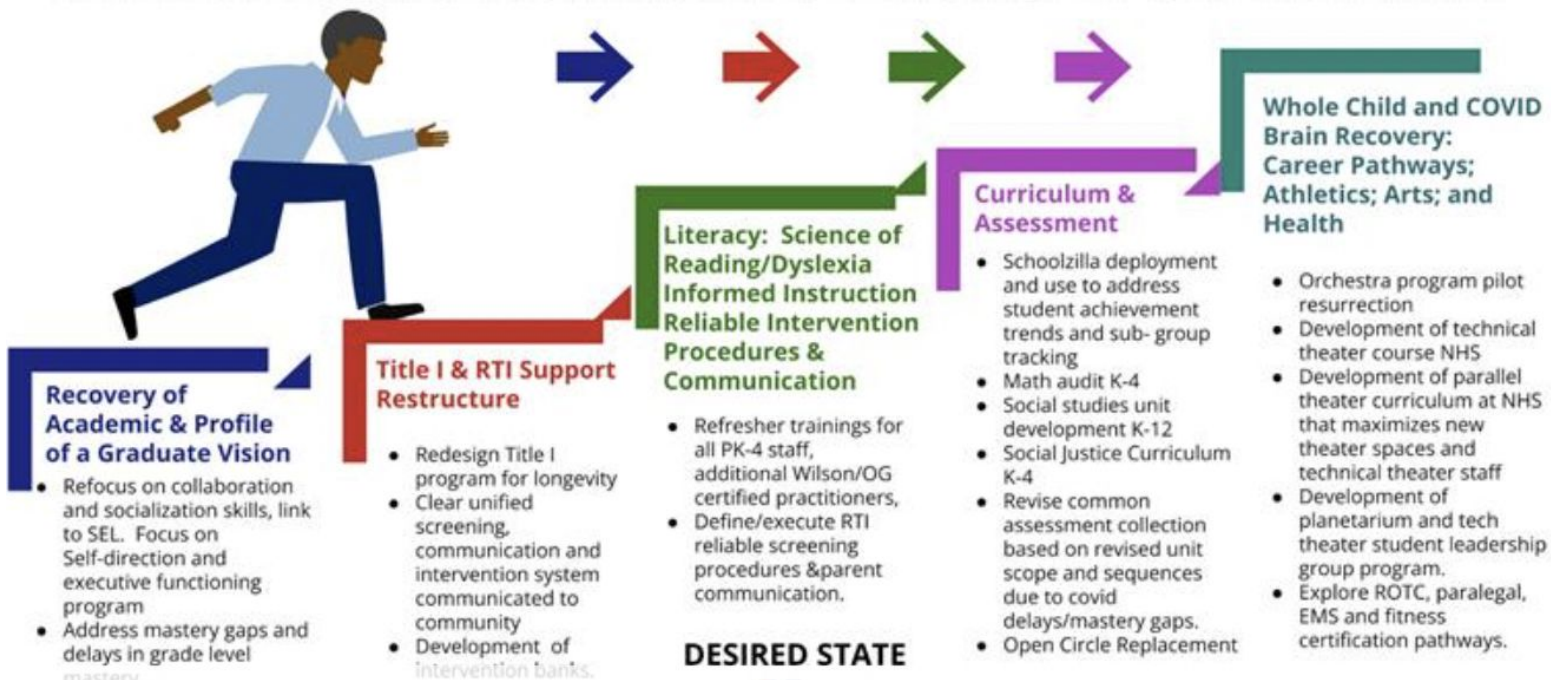
SALARY OR NON-SALARY	NPS Categories	Sum of FY23 Actual	Sum of FY24 ORIGINAL APPROP	Sum of FY25 LS Budget Request	Sum of FY25 LS Dollar Change	% Change from FY24
SALARIES	ADMIN & SUPPORT	\$ 3,687,484	\$ 3,773,551	\$ 4,054,171	\$ 280,621	7.4%
	INSTRUCTION	\$ 57,333,271	\$ 59,231,202	\$ 65,202,101	\$ 5,970,899	10.1%
	ATHLETICS& ACTIVITIES	\$ 1,300,715	\$ 967,708	\$ 1,201,585	\$ 233,877	24.2%
	HEALTH SERVICES	\$ 1,131,949	\$ 1,132,451	\$ 1,281,758	\$ 149,307	13.2%
	FACILITIES	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
	TECHNOLOGY	\$ 168,550	\$ 192,247	\$ 195,600	\$ 3,353	1.7%
	BENEFITS & EQUIP	\$ 30,650	\$ 30,118	\$ 35,658	\$ 5,540	18.4%
SALARIES Total		\$ 63,712,618	\$ 65,327,277	\$ 71,970,873	\$ 6,643,597	10.2%
NON-SALARY	ADMIN & SUPPORT	\$ 646,556	\$ 1,113,115	\$ 1,201,045	\$ 87,930	7.9%
	INSTRUCTION	\$ 2,947,444	\$ 3,381,111	\$ 3,403,708	\$ 22,597	0.7%
	ATHLETICS& ACTIVITIES	\$ 235,718	\$ 111,872	\$ 110,678	\$ (1,194)	-1.1%
	HEALTH SERVICES	\$ 148,886	\$ 165,140	\$ 195,140	\$ 30,000	18.2%
	FACILITIES	\$ 2,395,243	\$ 3,108,734	\$ 2,719,750	\$ (388,984)	-12.5%
	TECHNOLOGY	\$ 1,004,326	\$ 1,098,900	\$ 1,149,650	\$ 50,750	4.6%
	BENEFITS & EQUIP	\$ 3,235	\$ 3,332	\$ 3,332	\$ (0)	0.0%
	TRANSPORTATION	\$ 3,249,400	\$ 3,280,817	\$ 4,744,066	\$ 1,463,249	44.6%
	TUITIONS	\$ 4,602,983	\$ 5,688,836	\$ 4,370,860	\$ (1,317,976)	-23.2%
NON-SALARY Total		\$ 15,233,791	\$ 17,951,857	\$ 17,898,228	\$ (53,629)	-0.3%
Grand Total		\$ 78,946,409	\$ 83,279,134	\$ 89,869,102	\$ 6,589,968	7.9%





# PROFILE OF A NATICK SCHOOL GRADUATE

*Excel in academic achievement, and Profile of a Natick Graduate (POG) competencies for all groups and subgroups of students.*







# KEY BUDGET ELEMENTS

- Transportation
  - New bid
  - Bus subsidy
- Grant funded staffing positions to support student needs and district STP goals
- Trending need for services
- Athletics
- Out of District Tuition
- Use of one time funding
- Staffing reductions



# CHANGES IN NEW STAFFING

- Trending need for student services
- Elementary Library Media Specialists
- Elementary Assistant Principals
- Elementary and Middle School Math Coaches
- Elementary Math Interventionists
- Digital and Personalized Learning
- Elementary School Counselors
- Director of Social and Emotional Learning and Equity



# OVERVIEW OF FY25 BUDGET FUNDING GAP

Original FY24 Appropriation	83,279,134	
FY25 level service at 7.9%	89,869,102	[incl CB offset = 3,381,994]
Difference	6,589,968	
Proposed available funding 4.22%	3,516,165	86,795,299 [Incl 1.6 mi ARPA]
Bus .52%	429,844	
Remainder	2,643,959	
	2,000,000	Additional CB offset
	+149,780	Improvements
		137,280 SS
		12,500 Gen'l
	793,639	Remaining Gap
	-135,000	Johnson Closure
	-658,739	Possible staff reductions
	0.00	Remaining Gap

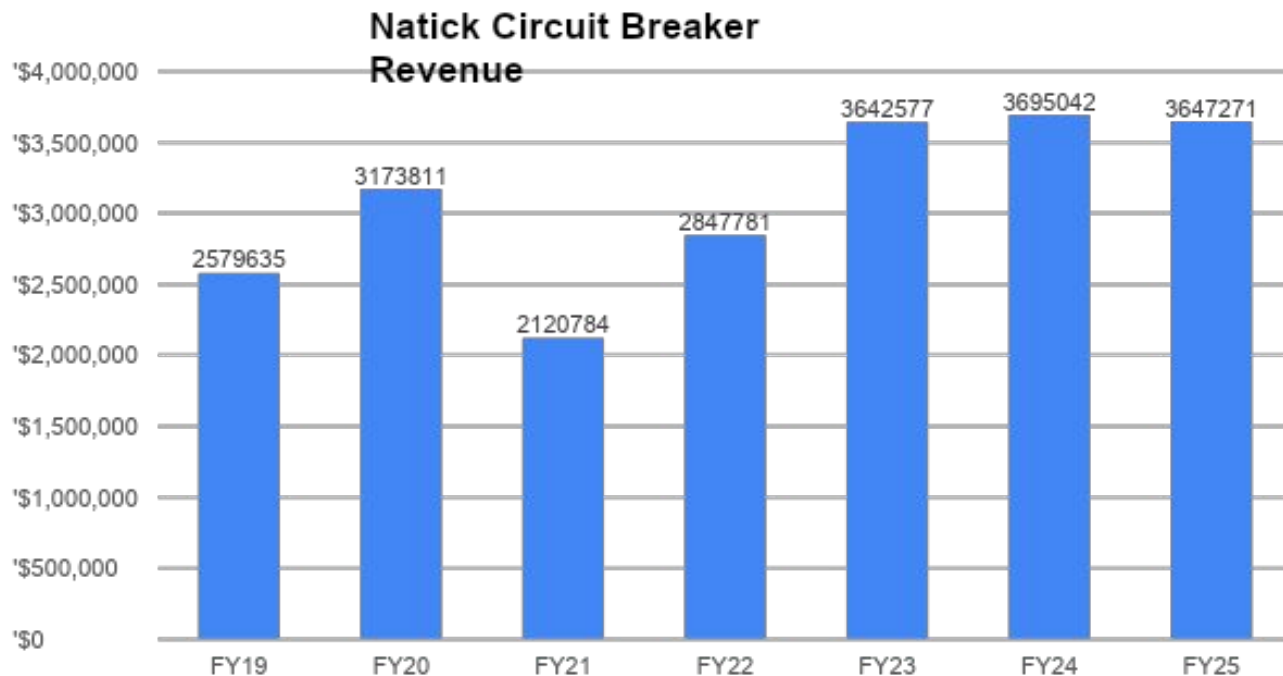


# ENTITLEMENT GRANT SUMMARY

Grant Name	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25 Est.
ESSER 1	\$ 279,511	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ESSER III	\$ 464,968	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ESSER III	\$ -	\$ 1,022,514	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Title II - A - Teacher Quality	\$ 86,820	\$ 85,836	\$ 86,906	\$ 77,194	\$ 77,194
Title II :ELA Acquisition -EL Migrant	\$ 25,654	\$ 26,952	\$ 25,166	\$ 32,777	\$ 32,777
Federal: IDEA	\$ 1,277,806	\$ 1,335,270	\$ 1,373,398	\$ 1,488,851	\$ 1,488,851
ARP: SPED	\$ -	\$ 305,273	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Early Childhood Special Ed - Fed	\$ 33,559	\$ 34,003	\$ 35,975	\$ 36,934	\$ 36,934
ARP: SPED Early Childhood	\$ -	\$ 28,447	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ARP: Homeless	\$ -	\$ 9,010	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Title I	\$ 198,875	\$ 206,448	\$ 464,052	\$ 210,028	\$ 210,028
Title IV, Part A: Student Support & Enrichment	\$ 24,749	\$ 10,000	\$ 14,772	\$ 34,005	\$ 34,005
<b>Total Entitlements</b>	<b>\$ 2,391,942</b>	<b>\$ 3,063,753</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,269</b>	<b>\$ 1,879,789</b>	<b>\$ 1,879,789</b>
<b>% Change From Prior Year</b>		<b>28%</b>	<b>-35%</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>0%</b>



# CIRCUIT BREAKER REVENUE





# CIRCUIT BREAKER OVERVIEW

- To be received in FY24: 3,647,271
- Projected use of circuit breaker for FY24: 3,943,821
- Projected amount to carry forward to FY25: 2,700,000
- Projected to be received in FY25: 3,647,271 (70% Reimb)
- Projected offset for FY25: 5,381,994
- Projected remaining in FY25 to carry forward to FY26: 965,277
- Projected to be received in FY26 will be less than for FY25 due to decrease in tuition costs in FY25



# DESE COHORT COMPARISONS

FY22 Total Per Pupil Spending, DESE Cohort





FY25 Budget Hearing scheduled for March 4

Continue discussions with Town partners and civic members





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**ITEM TITLE:** February 1st Enrollment Report  
**DATE:**  
**ITEM TYPE:**  
**ITEM SUMMARY:**  
**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**  
**RECOMMENDATION:**

---

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Description	File Name	Type
February 1st Enrollment Report	february_NPS_Student_Enrollment_-_2024_02_February.pdf	Cover Memo

# Natick Public Schools - Student Enrollment February 01, 2024

		January 01, 2024																February 01, 2024																
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total			K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total			
NHS KENNEDY WILSON											436	427	382	376	1,621	NHS KENNEDY WILSON											435	427	382	375	1,619			
							242	214	234	220					910							243	215	236	221					915				
							188	194	180	191					753							186	194	179	189					748				
BEN-HEM      Total:			20	16	20	20	20										BEN-HEM      Total:			22	16	19	20	20										
			20	19	20	20	21																											
			21	18	20	19	20																											
			21	19	20	20	19																											
			21		20	20	21																											
				20																														
		103	72	120	99	101									495			105	72	119	99	101									496			
BROWN      Total:			20	21	20	22	22										BROWN      Total:			20	21	20	22	22										
			19	20	20	22	22																											
			20	19	20	22	22																											
			20	21	20	21	23																											
			19	20	19		22																											
				19																														
		98	101	118	87	111									515			98	99	117	87	111									512			
JOHNSON      Total:					7	13	15										JOHNSON      Total:					7	13	15										
						16																												
					7	13	31												51					7	13	31								51
LILJA     Combo Classes: Combo Classes: Total:			18	18	23	19	20										LILJA     Combo Classes: Combo Classes: Total:			17	18	23	18	19										
			18	20	25	15	19																											
			16	18	22	18	18																											
			17	20		19	18																											
			16																															
				9	10																													
				8	12															8	12													
		85	93	92	71	75									416			83	92	93	70	76									414			
MEMORIAL      Total:			20	23	19	20	19										MEMORIAL      Total:			20	23	19	20	19										
			21	23	19	20	19																											
			20	23	19	21	21																											
			20	22	19	20	21																											
					18	21																												
		81	91	94	102	80									448			82	91	93	102	80									448			
PRE-K EAST PRE-K NHS PRE-K BEN		52													52	PRE-K EAST PRE-K NHS PRE-K BEN		53													53			
		66												66				67													67			
		12													12					12												12		
TOTAL:		130	367	357	431	372	398	430	408	414	411	436	427	382	376	5,339	Total:		132	368	354	429	371	399	429	409	415	410	435	427	382	375	5,335	

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**ITEM TITLE:** Vote to Approve Calendar Task Force  
**DATE:**  
**ITEM TYPE:**  
**ITEM SUMMARY:**  
**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**  
**RECOMMENDATION:**

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**ITEM TITLE:** Approval of the Permanent Superintendent Contract

**DATE:**

**ITEM TYPE:**

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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