

*Natick Public Schools  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
April 1, 2019*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, April 1, 2019 at 7:15 p.m. in the School Committee Room, third floor, Town Hall. Dr. Anna Nolin called the meeting to order because it was the first meeting after the town elections and took roll call at 7:15 p.m.

Members Present: Matt Brand, Cathi Collins, Henry Haugland, Donna McKenzie, Lisa Tabenkin, Julie McDonough, Hayley Sonneborn

Others Present:	Anna Nolin	Superintendent
	Kirk Downing	Assistant Superintendent
	Timothy Luff	Assistant Superintendent
	Peter Gray	Director of Finance
	Rose McDermott	Recording Secretary

Mr. Jefferson Wood, Teacher Representative joined the meeting at approximately 7:24pm. At approximately 7:38pm, Dr. Nolin and Ms. Tabenkin left the meeting to address the Board of Selectmen regarding the Facilities Director position during their meeting on the second floor. Dr. Nolin returned at approximately 8:17pm. Ms. Tabenkin was unable to return to the meeting while it was in session.

**Public Speak**

Dr. Nolin asked if anyone wished to come forward for Public Speak. Ms. Corey Spaulding came forward and asked to be placed on the agenda to discuss the ethics of the Natick School Committee. Specifically regarding the School Committee's residency policy in 2013. Ms. Spaulding asked that Chair Tabenkin step down from her position as chair. Dr. Nolin thanked Ms. Spaulding

**Reorganization of the School Committee**

Due to town elections held on March 27, 2019, a reorganization of the School Committee is necessary. Chair Tabenkin motioned to nominate Ms. McDonough as Chair of the School Committee. Ms. Collins seconded. It was unanimously approved by those present 7-0-0. Chair Tabenkin motioned to nominate Mr. Brand as Vice Chair of the School Committee. Mr. Haugland seconded. It was unanimously approved by those present 7-0-0. Ms. Collins motioned to nominate Dr. McKenzie as School Committee Clerk. Mr. Brand seconded. It was unanimously approved by those present 7-0-0. The School Committee then took their new seats at the table. Ms. Spaulding approached the podium and wanted to confirm Ms. McDonough's employment. Chair McDonough did not feel this was a relevant question and reminded her of the topic on the agenda. Ms. Spaulding continued to ask the same question and Chair McDonough repeated the non-relevance of the question to the agenda item.

**Fine and Performing Arts Program Update**

Dr. Nolin introduced Mr. Craig Chisolm, who is the Instrumental Music Director at Natick High School and this year has taken on the oversight of the Music Department. Mr. Chisolm spoke in depth about the Music Department and the Instrumental Music Program. He provided a presentation to the School Committee with the following information:

- Areas of impact
- Several goals from 1 – 9.1

Mr. Chisolm also discussed assisting in creating a non-profit parent group, which would be designed to support the music department in many ways. This parent group would have a board. Besides fundraising, parents would stage-manage and assist in many other ways. Mr. Chisolm has had the experience with this kind of a group in his previous school districts. There has been an ongoing discussion as to how to have parents more formally involved. Mr. Chisolm is hoping to get information out to parents in May so they can assemble this parent group. Mr. Chisolm was very moved by the overwhelming support of this community. Ms. Collins discussed having found there not to be enough visibility for the Fine Arts Department. Mr. Chisolm reviewed Goal 3.1, which is creating pages on the following social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. There is a YouTube channel where you can watch concerts live. Ms. Corey Spaulding approached the podium and said Mr. Chisolm's presentation was fabulous and unbelievably inspiring. Ms. Spaulding reminded everyone that the School Committee policy does not require parent organizations to be registered. Ms. Spaulding offered her support and expertise in helping the group get registered and following the law. Mr. Stephen Miller, Director of Fine and Performing Arts spoke in depth about the Fine and Performing Arts Program. Mr. Miller discussed the DESE updating the standards to include media arts. Mr. Miller then presented a video showing the student's accomplishments this year. This video included many of the schools in our district. Mr. Miller discussed opportunities that we provide for students to cross between music and theatre or filmography.

### **Ring of Honor Request - Second Meeting**

Dr. Nolin reviewed the previous meeting where Mr. Lamb had been nominated for the Ring of Honor installation located at the Memorial field house by several community members. The third meeting will be on April 22, 2019 and there will be additional speakers. The School Committee will take a vote at that meeting.

### **Superintendent's Entry Plan**

Dr. Nolin reviewed an executive summary she shared with the School Committee and discussed some high points. The summary shared with whom Dr. Nolin spoke with, documents she examined and the high-level summary of the family and community engagement survey. Dr. Nolin explained the four key findings:

- District climate and culture
- Social/Emotional Learning
- Emerging Equity Considerations
- Special Education Crossover Needs

Dr. Nolin feels parents are more isolated than ever. They go through social media outlets. Greater focus on interdisciplinary. There is a parent culture of nervousness. The district gave out books to parents and asked them to create book groups. There are 26 book groups now. This reduces parent anxiety, which reduces anxiety in kids. Dr. Nolin is very excited about the SEL work the district is doing. An increased focus on the arts, this is a push so students can take control and find their passions and when they do that, it reduces these other potential issues that may arise. Dr. Nolin has sent and is sending teams from each school to William James College's Social Emotional Learning Program to study the most current research and to be immersed in the field. Mr. Luff discussed the district-wide steering committee looking at SEL in general and looking to develop a plan to move forward in the future. Dr. Nolin reviewed the district's social justice page and guidance page, which details the pre-K-12 SEL. That includes each grade level as well as lessons. Dr. Nolin discussed her open office hours. About 3-6 people at each meeting. They love it. A parent brought in their child's work. She feels parents want to get to know her and this gives them that opportunity in a small group setting.

### **Office of Teaching, Learning & Innovation Entry Plan**

Kirk Downing, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching Learning & Innovation presented his entry plan/update. Mr. Downing reviewed how we measure if these themes are progressing by curriculum audits. There are factors that speak to us. The hiring turnover that we have. Our professional development matching the practices. Mr. Downing discussed an important element we are going to be implementing which is wrapping the Portrait of a Graduate competencies into all of our curriculum documents. The School Committee asked several questions and Mr. Downing answered them in depth.

### **Update on the Settlement of the First Amendment Case**

Dr. Nolin provided an update on the settlement on the first amendment case the School Committee and Ms. Sutter and Ms. Spaulding were involved with. Officially, through the court system, it is filed and over.

### **Approval of School Committee Subcommittee/Liaison Assignments**

Chair McDonough reviewed the current assignments. Ms. Sonneborn would like to wait until the next meeting. She would like a description and time commitment. Chair McDonough asked that the person who is currently in the position, please write up a description. Chair McDonough revealed that Ms. Tabenkin would like to step down from the FPC assignment and she asked that a member consider replacing her. Cathi Collins said she would be happy to serve on the FPC liaison assignment. Dr. Nolin was able to provide some detail in regards to the time commitments. The School Committee will finalize assignments at the next meeting.

### **Dr. Tracy Gladstone with Hey NHS Data Update**

Dr. Nolin presented the power point sent by Dr. Gladstone. This program is incorporated into our operating budget and it is an interview protocol that they do with students. This is designed to unearth signs of mental health issues and signs of potential suicides. The program comes with referrals to programs that support students and families. This has been highly successful in the meeting the unknown needs in our school system. Dr. Nolin reviewed the roll out of the program. This has always been for 7th and 9th grades. A letter goes home to families and parents must opt in or out. They are linked up with resources right from the beginning and there is follow up right from the Gladstone group. Mr. Luff infused that the best thing is the trusted adult work the district has been implementing at the High School. Every student has a trusted adult that they can go to for help. The SEL work and continuing it will go a long way. Mr. Harrigan will be coming back in May to update the School Committee on the trusted adult and diversity goals. Wilson School has had a long-standing mentoring program and Kennedy has an advisory program that Wilson is exploring implementation of a similar scenario. This will allow both schools to be parallel.

### **Panorama Family and Community Engagement Survey Data**

Dr. Nolin reviewed the survey data. There was open response data and it is there in full raw form. There is a lot of commentary there to sift through. Dr. Nolin felt the most important information is what was on the summary page. There were 700 responses from families. Dr. Nolin felt there is a lot to be learned here.

### **Warrant Report**

Mr. Gray did not have a report to share with the School Committee.

### **Discussion About Article: Ready To Be Counted:**

#### **The Research Case for Education Policy Action on Non-Cognitive Skills**

The School Committee discussed the article. Dr. Nolin conveyed that this particular piece of research one of the strongest analogies for social/emotional learning. We look at the best practices and we ask ourselves, what are the programs that we will build upon this foundation. Dr. McKenzie and Mr. Haugland did not like the article. Dr. Nolin explained this one way for us to set the tone is by having robust

educational policy and practice discussions and we should be pushing the public dialogue around about what we do and why we add value.

### **Members Concerns**

Ms. Collins has been looking at the town meeting warrant. Ms. Collins is going to motion to postpone some articles so that we can get to the school budget on April 9, 2019. Ms. Sonneborn asked if there was going to be a retreat.

At 10:44 p.m., Ms. Collins moved to adjourn. Mr. Brand seconded. It was unanimously approved by those present 7-0-0.

Anna Nolin  
Superintendent  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Attest:\_\_\_\_\_

Rose McDermott  
Recording Secretary

### **Documents Provided in Novus Agenda**

Fine and Performing Arts Program Update

NPS Music Dept Entry Plan presentation

FPA Update

Superintendent's Entry Plan

Discussion About Article: Ready To Be Counted: The Research Case for Education Policy Action on Non-Cognitive Skills

Panorama Family and Community Engagement Survey Data

Dr. Tracy Gladstone with Hey NHS Data Update

Agenda and materials used at this meeting can be found here: [Agenda & Materials](#)