

Natick Public Schools
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
December 5, 2022

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, December 5, 2022, at 6:15pm via an in-person and virtual meeting. Chair Collins called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:16pm.

Members Present: Cathi Collins, Dr. Shai Fuxman, Elise Gorseth, Hayley Sonneborn, Catherine Brunell
Julie McDonough (Arrived at 6:17PM)

Members Missing: Dr. Donna McKenzie (Arrived during Executive Session)

Others Present:	Dr. Anna Nolin	Superintendent
	Mr. Tim Luff	Deputy Superintendent
	Ms. Rose McDermott	Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary
	Dr. Peter Gray	Assistant Superintendent
	Ms. Sue Balboni	Director of Teaching, Learning & Innovation
	Dr. Arthur Fergusson	Director of Social Emotional Learning & Equity
	Mr. Tim Cesarini	Teacher Representative (remote)
	Ms. Inkyoung Lee	Student Representative (remote)

Chair Collins moved for approval for the School Committee to enter into Executive Session for this purpose:

1. To conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; (Superintendent)
2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with or to conduct collective bargaining sessions (Administrative Assistants)

Ms. Brunell seconded. Chair Collins called for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Ms. McDonough – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn – Yes

Chair Collins – Yes

It was unanimously approved 6-0-0.

Chair Collins stated they would be returned to open session at 7:00pm.

The School Committee returned to open session at approximately 7:23pm.

Public Speak

Chair Collins had not received any requests via email. There was no one in person requesting to speak.

Announcements

Dr. Nolin Informed the community that on Saturday, November 19th, 38 Natick High School students traveled to Milton High School to audition for the MMEA 2023 Eastern District Festival, along with

approximately 900 other students from Eastern Massachusetts. There were 22 students from Natick accepted. Mr. Craig Chisholm, Director of Fine Arts and the students were in attendance and together they congratulated the students. They were very proud of their accomplishment. Dr. Nolin also informed the community about the Natick Innovation and Learning Summit that was had on Monday, November 30, 2022. Dr. Nolin gave a shout out to staff who ran professional development sessions for their colleagues. There was also PLC time for all in the afternoon.

Representative Updates/Concerns

Teacher Representative, Tim Cesarini, had nothing new to share. Student Representative, Inkyoung Lee, informed the Committee that last weekend a play was held, Little Shop of Horrors. Dr. McKenzie attended and stated that the singing and the show was amazing. Prior to Thanksgiving break the high school had their annual pep rally. It was great to have it again. The annual food drive ended, and they collected 5,000 items which surpassed their goal.

Dr. Nolin reviewed tonight's agenda.

Update on Social Emotional Learning and Response to Intervention

Dr. Nolin introduced Dr. Art Fergusson, Director of Social, Emotional Learning and Equity. He had provided prior to the meeting, a memo to the School Committee. He discussed Universal screening and that it provides an opportunity for the early identification of students who may be at-risk of developing SEB (social, emotional, and behavioral) challenges and students who could benefit from early intervention. Screening provides us a snapshot of our student's presentation in a moment in time and gives us an opportunity to assess student response to any existing tier 1 interventions. Dr. Fergusson explained that we screen to intervene. Starting this year, in response to the growing clinical needs of our students and developmental research, we've added the SAEBS (Social Academic Emotional Behavioral Risk Screener) as part of our universal screening process primarily at the middle and high school levels. Dr. Fergusson also informed the School Committee that there have been significant increases in students needing assistance from our staff. We should be able to support the students. Dr. Nolin unveiled the new RTI webpage. She asked for feedback from families and how we can make any processes more family friendly. Parents will be contacted during the goal setting process for their inclusion in creating the goals.

Enrollment Update

Dr. Nolin provided an update. We are down seven students at elementary and up three students at middle school. We haven't seen any more bubbles. We may need to use reserve circuit breaker funding for all students.

Review Drafts of Proposed 2023-2024 School Calendars

Dr. Nolin reviewed the proposed calendars. Families like to plan the rest of their vacations for the rest of the year. Dr. Nolin informed the Committee that they will not be voting on the calendar until February. However, she is asking the Committee to consider two calendars. She wanted to signal to our families that there are two possible ends to the school year and that we are almost ¾'s into the second year of discussing the calendar being more inclusive to world religions. There is a policy in front of the policy committee that does make revisions as to the ways that we address all families of all religions. Dr. Nolin also gave her recommendation to the Policy Subcommittee of what she thinks the calendar should be.

This has been a long time sitting in draft. Those families are waiting to hear from us and see signals of inclusion and belonging in our school system. The Policy Subcommittee will review the holiday calendar. Ms. McDonough moved to postpone discussion of proposals or changes to religious observances in the Natick Public Schools school year calendar until the policy sub-committee has provided a report on its findings from their work on this topic over the past year and the full committee has had the opportunity to respond to those findings. Dr. McKenzie seconded the motion. Ms. McDonough felt it was premature to put this out at this time. The full Committee needs time to ask for additional data. The policy subcommittee should come back with their findings. Dr. McKenzie stated that the policy subcommittee is committed to having an inclusive and equitable calendar. The Policy Subcommittee is meeting on December 22nd. There is also another meeting in January. They will come back to the School Committee with recommendations. Dr. Fuxman added a friendly amendment to have the findings and recommendations discussed no later than February 6th. Ms. Gorseth seconded. Ms. McDonough would like an opportunity to receive information and be able to ask for additional work to be done. She doesn't believe she can accept that. Dr. Nolin is pushing them all to make a decision about this. Dr. Nolin reminded the Committee that we are almost two years into this and if we want to live our equity goals, we need to have some urgency. It's been difficult to lead on this process. At approximately 8:14pm Ms. Brunel motioned for a recess. Ms. Sonneborn seconded. It was approved by a vote of 6-1-0. Chair Collins opposed the recess.

The Committee returned to opens session at 8:20pm. Chair Collins asked for a vote on the motion. Dr. Fuxman revoked his friendly amendment. He offered a new amendment that the subcommittee has to come with findings no later than February 6th. Ms. McDonough accepted with the addition of the findings will be reported no later than February 6th. Dr. McKenzie accepted the amendment. Ms. McDonough adjusted her motion to include the amendment. Ms. McDonough moved to postpone discussion of changes to religious observances in the NPS school year calendar until the policy sub-committee has provided a report on its findings from their work on this topic over the past year and the full committee has had the opportunity to respond to those findings. The findings will be reported no later than February 6, 2023. Chair Collins asked for a roll call vote on the motion.

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Ms. McDonough – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn – Yes

Chair Collins – No

It was approved 6-1-0.

Update on FY24 Budget

Dr. Gray gave the first proposed draft with data as of today. There are many unknowns and numerous committee meetings. Major drivers that we have no control over is fuel and utility costs. We are encouraged at the fact that as we go through this process, we will be able to come up with a budget that will be fair and equitable. Dr. Gray had provided the School Committee two documents with numbers and assumptions. This is a long journey through town meeting in April. We are going to have a webinar discussing how districts can budget for Chapter 70. He expects that Governor Baker will put forward his last budget and they will caution us not to be so optimistic. Dr. Gray informed the

Committee that along with our Town partners we are considering doing more joint meetings and more innovated ways to inform our constituents.

Parent Coordinating Council (PCC) Equity Working Group Discussion

Dr. Nolin discussed the PCC meetings and their worries about inequities, fundraising and opportunities. It's come up a lot over the years. It came up when Dr. Nolin was principal at the Wilson Middle School. This isn't a new conversation. The difference now is we have a strategic plan in place that says we will examine all these aspects of our practice and put them into play. We are trying to consider how we can address field trips that take a full day of school. Shouldn't we pay for that and make sure each student gets the same experience. Ms. McDonough believes they were very receptive to the idea. Chris Therrien, PCC member said that a lot of good information was gathered at last meeting. We should be able to make an equity working group.

Warrant Review

Chair Collins has signed 4 accounts payable warrants since November 10th which totaled \$1,481,032.25 and one payroll warrant of \$2,783,723.70. She expects the next payroll to be slightly higher because longevity payments will be made.

Action Items

1. Approve Policy Changes to IK-STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS, ILBA - DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS, IMB-TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS, JF-A-RESIDENCY POLICY, JICFB-BULLYING PREVENTION, JICK- HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS, JJE-STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES, JRD-STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS, KDD- NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES, AD-MISSION STATEMENT, ADC-TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES PROHIBITED, ADF-WELLNESS POLICY, JJA-STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, JJH-R-STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS, JLCC-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, JRA-STUDENT RECORDS, IC/ICA-SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR, ID-SCHOOL DAY, IE-ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION, IGA-CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, IHAM-HEALTH EDUCATION, IHB-SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS (PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS), JB-EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, JC-ATTENDANCE AREAS, JCA-ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS, JEB-ENTRANCE AGE, JF-SCHOOL ADMISSIONS, JH-STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES, JHD-EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, JICFA-PROHIBITION OF HAZING, JICH-ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED, JRA-STUDENT RECORDS, IHBEA-ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, KF-PUBLIC USE OF NATICK SCHOOL FACILITIES, FLAG POLICY, MEDICAL POLICIES

The School Committee had been provided original and redlined versions. Dr. Nolin stated that these were mostly small changes that had been backlogged from last year. There are three medical policies. However, she asked how the Committee would like her to proceed because it has come to her attention that there may be some motions coming on the floor. The decisions were made by the policy subcommittee for the revisions. As well, our attorney Andy Waugh also vetted them. Ms. Brunell felt that this was all a surprise to her. She had never received a response to her email. Chair Collins asked for her to elaborate. Ms. Brunell sent the email on Friday and in the email, she asked questions and feels that this is going against our norms. Mr. Luff responded stating that we had received her email on Friday. He had a very long schedule on Friday, and it took him a long time to go through her possible motions. He also felt that the Committee should have the conversation and make the motions they felt appropriate, and we would assist in recommendations. Dr. McKenzie, Chair of the Policy Subcommittee was going to

respond to Ms. Brunell, which she did. Dr. McKenzie summarized Ms. Brunell's feelings that she feels the public needs more time to review policies before being voted on. Ms. Brunell recommends not voting on nine policies. Ms. Brunell is disagreeing with the decision made by the Policy Subcommittee because she didn't attend the last meeting and had she been there, she would have brought these up. Dr. Nolin is concerned because many of the policies are not grammatical changes. Even though Ms. Brunell was not present, they did review each of the extensive notes for each policy and then sent to our attorney again review them. Mr. Luff and Ms. McDermott then had to spend the day crosschecking them back and verifying notes. All of them were addressed except for two items that are small fixes. Dr. Nolin wanted to move forward with this backlog that has been before the public for two meetings. Dr. Fuxman asked for clarification. He proposed that they approve the ones they want to approve. Dr. McKenzie assured the public that the Policy Subcommittee carefully vetted the policies and went methodically through all of Ms. Brunell's suggestions before they made the recommendations. The public may have confidence in what the Subcommittee has recommended. Dr. Fuxman moved to approve Policy IK as stated in our documents. Ms. Collins seconded. Ms. Brunell moved to amend paragraph three in Policy IK to read "in addition to the periodic reports, parents and guardians will be notified when a student's performance warrants attention". This sentence would replace the current paragraph three. Ms. McDonough seconded. Chair Collins called for a vote. Ms. Brunell asked for a recess and Chair Collins stated they would return to open session at approximately 9:20pm. The School Committee returned to open session at 9:21pm. Ms. Brunell felt the language we are proposing in our policy is different from The Massachusetts Association of School Committees. Dr. Nolin explained that the reason we don't automatically accept/adopt their policies is that we have an attorney/firm that review all policies. Our public speak policy was a perfect example as to why you don't want to wholesale adopt MASC policies. Sometimes the attorneys have a different way to look at policy changes because they look at all our policies. A lot of these pieces were just updating citations. Ms. Brunell feels we need to be very sensitive about the communication with parents. Dr. Fuxman withdrew his motion. Chair Collins asked for a vote on Ms. Brunell's amendment. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0-0. Ms. Brunell moved that we pull Policies, IMB, JF, JJE, ADF, IH, AM, JC, JCA and JF from tonight's vote. Ms. McDonough seconded. Chair Collins motioned to approve all of these and anything that needs to change shall come back to the Policy Subcommittee which already took most of the comments for consideration. Dr. Fuxman seconded. Ms. McDonough motioned to approve the policies that haven't been named by Ms. Brunell. Dr. Nolin relisted the policies that Ms. Brunell had read. Ms. Brunell seconded. Chair Collins called for a vote on Ms. McDonough's motion of removing all those named by Ms. Brunell and voting affirmatively on all the rest. The motion was passed by a vote is 7-0-0. Dr. Nolin asked if this is the way they want to run their subcommittees? Dr. McKenzie, Chair of the Policy Subcommittee does not want to run the subcommittee like this. They vetted all these policies. They reviewed all of Ms. Brunell's edits. They had a quorum and voted. Subcommittees shouldn't make recommendations that have been voted on and then have one member that does not agree with the outcome and have everyone have to go back and re-edit them again. This does not seem the most productive way forward. Ms. Brunell did not agree and stated it was an unfair categorization. Some of these policies are shifting entirely. Dr. McKenzie asked if anyone on the full Committee had any questions warranting them being pulled from being voted on this evening. Dr. McKenzie reaffirmed that these were vetted by the subcommittee. Dr. Fuxman believes we have already had access to these policies already at the previous meeting and were there any changes made since then? No changes had been made. Dr. Fuxman fully supports that we vote these tonight. We reviewed them last meeting, the public has had them, the Policy Subcommittee has approved them and the idea that we must keep delaying things to make ourselves feel important is not a good way to

operate our committee. He was elected to make decisions and move the district forward. It's important not to get stuck in neutral and he plead to the Committee to vote on these tonight and do our jobs. Dr. McKenzie assured anyone again that these were vetted. Chair Collins is a MASC Officer, and she believes in MASC but she doesn't believe we should take everything that they say verbatim. We did our due diligence. Mr. Luff reminded the Committee that we have developed our policies based on Natick values and guidelines for many years. Mr. Luff's concern is that we have the Policy Subcommittee do the work and they voted for these policies. This is so we can then get to work on other things. Not everyone's voice is going to be accepted in terms of what they vote for but the Policy Subcommittee did incorporate recommendations. Dr. Nolin asked what is the point or role of the Policy Subcommittee if we are going to do the same work here that was already done? Ms. McDonough motioned to place the nine policies that we pulled on the 12/19 agenda with a limited discussion time. Chair Collins stated we don't need a motion for that.

At approximately, 9:55pm, Dr. McKenzie motioned to adjourn. Dr. Fuxman seconded. It was unanimously approved 7-0-0.

Anna Nolin
Superintendent
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Rose McDermott
Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Attest:_____

Documents Provided in Novus Agenda and materials used at this meeting:

Superintendent's Presentation

Dr. Fergusson Memo on Universal Screenings

Drafts of Two Proposed 2023-2024 School Year Calendars

Holiday and Cultural Observances Draft

FY24 NPS Budget and Assumptions

Enrollment Report

Policies: IK-STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS, ILBA - DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS, IMB-TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS, JF-A-RESIDENCY POLICY, JICFB-BULLYING PREVENTION, JICK- HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS, JJE-STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES, JRD-STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS, KDD- NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES, AD-MISSION STATEMENT, ADC-TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES PROHIBITED, ADF-WELLNESS POLICY, JJA-STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, JJH-R-STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS, JLCC-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, JRA-STUDENT RECORDS, IC/ICA-SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR,ID-SCHOOL DAY, IE-ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION, IGA-CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, IHAM-HEALTH EDUCATION, IHB-SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS (PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS), JB-EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, JC-ATTENDANCE AREAS, JCA-ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS, JEB-ENTRANCE AGE, JF-SCHOOL ADMISSIONS, JH-STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES, JHD-EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, JICFA-PROHIBITION OF HAZING, JICH-ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY

STUDENTS PROHIBITED, JRA-STUDENT RECORDS, IHBEA-ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, KF-PUBLIC USE OF
NATICK SCHOOL FACILITIES, FLAG POLICY, MEDICAL POLICIES
School Committee Minutes of September 19, 2022, October 3, 2022, and October 17, 2022 and Executive
Session minutes of September 19, 2022 and October 3, 2022
New England Institute of Technology Information
Lil' Rhody Rumble Information
Donations
Revised School Handbooks with New Dress Code Policy
FY23 First Quarter Financial Update
FY23 Staffing Update
FY23 Grants Update
Budget Outlook Presentation for Town of Natick
FY23 – FY25 Natick Public Schools Budget Projections
MCAS Presentation with Update and NEAP Results
Tiered Focus Monitoring Report – Student Services Report
Enrollment Report