

Natick Public Schools  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
June 5, 2023

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday June 5, 2023, at 6:30pm via an in-person and virtual meeting. Chair Fuxman called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:30pm.

Members Present: Dr. Shai Fuxman, Elise Gorseth, Matt Brand, Kate Flathers, Catherine Brunell, Cathi Collins, Julie McDonough

Others Present:	Dr. Anna Nolin	Superintendent
	Mr. Tim Luff	Deputy Superintendent
	Ms. Sue Balboni	Director of Teaching, Learning & Innovation
	Ms. Rose McDermott	Recording Secretary
	Teacher Representative	Ratnakar Amaravadi
	Ms. Rasheedah Clayton	METCO Director (virtually)

Chair Fuxman motioned to move into Executive Session for this purpose:

1. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with Cafeteria Employees – Local #1116, Administrative Assistants Union, EAN Unit A, EAN Unit B, and Unit S
2. To conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; (Deputy Superintendent)
3. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with Non-Represented Personnel; (Accompanist, Lesson Program Coordinator)

Ms. Gorseth seconded. Chair Fuxman called for a roll call vote:

Ms. Flathers – Yes

Mr. Brand – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes

Ms. McDonough – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Collins – Yes

Chair Fuxman – Yes

The motion passed unanimously 7-0-0. Chair Fuxman stated they would be returning to open session at approximately 7:30pm. The School Committee proceeded to a private room.

The School Committee returned to Open Session at approximately 7:35pm.

### Announcements

Dr. Nolin announced that Lily Wheeler and JoJo Flynn are winners of the John F Kennedy Make a Difference Award. All middle school students (grades 6-8) participating in unique community service projects are eligible. School personnel should give special consideration to students who have distinguished themselves through their service work. Lily and Jojo were nominated by their social studies teacher, who is also the KMS and WMS Social Studies Department Head, Shivonne St. George.

Ms. St. George read aloud what she had submitted in her nomination of the two. They have done everything required to achieve their goals. They have reached out to partner with other communities on their own. Dr. Nolin also congratulated the class of 2023 – Dr. Fuxman rocked the house with his speech.

### **Public Speak**

Chair Fuxman asked if there was anyone present who wanted to participate in public speak. Dr. Donna McKenzie, approached the podium and informed the School Committee that the sound went off on during their virtual meeting surrounding the hiring of the Interim Superintendent. She believes it's entitlement to think everyone has internet access. There is a bill being passed that if a public body has a virtual only meeting – you must have a location where people can go to watch.

### **Representative Updates/Concerns**

Mr. Ratnakar Amaravadi, Teacher Representative had nothing to report for the EAN.

### **Subcommittee/Liaison Updates**

Update to School Start Time Discussion – Dr. Fuxman read a brief statement:

We wanted to communicate to you all that our negotiations pertaining to the change in start time have concluded without a decision, so there is no change on the immediate horizon. We can't say with certainty at this point if this is an issue that will resurface in our next contract negotiation.

The School Committee members are actively planning and working to address some of the obstacles that were uncovered both through our vote and the surveys. Some of these are childcare, lighting for fields, field usage, and deeper understanding for both educators and families living in Natick about what the change would mean.

We believe in supporting the best for our students in operationalizing the sleep science for adolescents, addressing care issues in our community, earlier start times for our METCO students and addressing after school activity venues.

Ms. McDonough urged the community to take action if they would like to see high school start times be later. Entire states such as California and Florida have changed the start times. The MIAA are in full support for later high school start times. Take action if you would like this change to happen.

PCC – Ms. Brunell updated the Committee. It's been an honor to work with the PCC this year. Fantastic experience. Started the school year by hitting some roadblocks to facility policies that they hadn't read. Dr. Nolin allowed the process to slow down and held meetings about facilities and rental policies. Ms. Brunell is stepping down as the liaison for the PCC for the upcoming year. Ms. McDonough and Ms. Collins will be the liaisons to PCC moving forward.

### **Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of Donations

Ms. Collins removed the donation from the consent agenda.

### **Action Items**

1. Approval of Updates to the Non-Represented Salary Schedule

This was discussed and approved during executive session. Dr. Nolin explained that it was the accompanists that had been left off. Ms. Collins moved approval. Mr. Brand seconded. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

## **2. Approval of Donations**

Ms. Collins wants the memo updated. There is a misspelling, and the word Band is written as Bank. Ms. Collins moved to accept the donation with the correction of the word bank to band. Mr. Brand seconded. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

## **Proposal and Overview of Paraprofessional Training Program for Staff Diversification**

Ms. Rasheedah Clayton joined us virtually in her capacity as an Influence 100 leader. Dr. Nolin has been mentoring her for two years and she along with Ms. Collins would attend all the meetings. Ms. Clayton had provided a presentation. Her action project was about Retention and Growth – Staff and Faculty of color. She reviewed her goal of dismantling barriers to equity. Ms. Clayton went on to review NPS employees of color by ethnicity, employees of color by job title and the diversity retention. She reviewed her theory of change which she believes will keep us moving the arrow. Being mentored by Dr. Nolin has been so helpful. She asked how could we create these mentorships for others? Something of a shadowing program. We have hired back many of our METCO alumni. Ms. Clayton keeps in touch and keep tabs on them. When they are considering opportunities after college, we would like them to consider coming to Natick. Keeping the connection with them is very important. She encourages them to be the teachers and staff they wanted to see at NHS.

## **Enrollment Update and Projected Enrollment for 2023/2024 School Year**

Dr. Nolin gave an update to the enrollment as of June 1. We have had a reduction of 3 students in the district. Nothing new that's a trend or anything different. Next year's enrollment projections were also provided. We have had additional students enroll at Lilja for Kindergarten. These are commensurate. We have added an additional classroom and teacher. If there is a surge, central office will know immediately.

## **Update on Appointment of the Interim Superintendent**

Chair Fuxman updated the community. The School Committee voted last week to approve the contract for our Interim Superintendent, Bella Wong. She will begin on July 1, 2023. She has already begun the transition process with Dr. Nolin. Ms. Gorseth and I met with her today. We did discuss and asked that she attend our next meeting. She will not be available on June 12th but is available on June 20th. We could have the first 30 minutes as an open meeting. We can then move into a retreat. Our retreat meetings are off camera. The meeting will be at 6:30pm (first meeting).

## **Superintendent Search Update**

Chair Fuxman stated that the School Committee is in agreement for a process. Dr. Fuxman proposed a 3-person task force. They will do the work to figure out the budget for the search firm and to identify and recommend a search firm. They will also determine which stakeholders will be on the search committee. Ms. Brunell asked if the three on the task force would automatically be on the search committee. She would be interested in serving in that roll. The task force would determine how many slots and then we will vote on how many from School Committee members will be on the search committee. Dr. Fuxman would like the task force to come back with a recommendation during the first meeting in September.

Ms. Collins and Mr. Brand are both interested on being on the task force. Mr. Brand explained that the sooner we get an RFP out there, the better. You ideally would have an RFP done during the summer to find a search firm to begin by the end of August. Ms. McDonough agrees with having the search firm in place for September 1st would be important. We want to be able to move quickly once the year starts. Ms. Brunell is also interested in the task force however would prefer to be on the search Committee. The scope of work for the task force would be, this is the RFP and here's what we believe a search committee would look like. Then for each of those individual groups, the groups would pick their own people. Mr. Brand, Ms. Collins, and Dr. Fuxman have volunteered to be on the task force.

#### **Warrant Review**

Dr. Fuxman approved an accounts payable warrant for \$ 304,968.15.

#### **2023/2024 School Committee Meeting Schedule**

The School Committee had received a list of meetings scheduled by Ms. McDermott. Their only suggestion would be for the retreats to be on the calendar. The retreats have never been listed. We could have the dates somewhere else. There was a suggestion to have these meetings on the actual school calendar. They have asked Ms. McDermott to add school committee meetings to the district calendar with an asterisk or other symbol/color and noted in the legend.

#### **Superintendent Evaluation**

Ms. McDonough informed the School Committee that she had reached out to the State Ethics Department because Ms. McDonough will be an employee of Dr. Nolin's once she becomes the Superintendent of Newton Schools. With the recommendation from School Committee counsel and the State Ethics Department, Ms. McDonough is recusing herself from the evaluation process.

At approximately 8:45pm, Ms. McDonough left the meeting.

Dr. Fuxman gave a brief update and description of what tonight will look like. We haven't done this in public previously. The evaluation involves three clusters of indicators.

Dr. Fuxman went through the DESE standards and each cluster of indicators, and allowed the members to give their rating. The following overall ratings were given to Dr. Nolin:

Overall rating for instructional leadership – Exemplary

Overall rating for Management and Operations – Exemplary

Overall rating for Family and Community Engagement – Exemplary

Overall rating for Professional Culture – Exemplary

Overall Summative rating – Exemplary

At approximately 10:00pm, Mr. Brand motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Collins seconded. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rose McDermott  
Recording Secretary

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

Superintendent's Presentation, Donation Report, Enrollment Report, Paraprofessional Training Program Presentation, School Committee meeting schedule for 2023/2024