



NMRSD Update March 8, 2024

Welcome ... to our new Director of Special Education, Mrs. Erin Upton, who will begin her new role on July 1, 2024!

Erin joins North Middlesex Regional School District with 26 years of experience working in special education, including 9 years as a special education administrator. Erin holds a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of New England and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Educational Leadership from Salem State University.

As a special education administrator Erin has developed and enhanced special education programs, increased meaningful inclusion opportunities, and improved student outcomes as evidenced through student performance on state and local assessments, progress toward IEP goals, attendance rates, and post-graduation outcomes.

Throughout the past year, Erin has been guiding the Lowell Public Schools through the transition to the New IEP document and is looking forward to supporting North Middlesex Regional School District through this transition as well.

Congratulations ... to Kayla Hawn and Rebecca Boutwell for being recognized by their colleagues and the Massachusetts School Nurse Organization for their work!

Kayla Hawn, our nurse at Spaulding, will receive the Rising Star Award. She is one of only ten school nurses in the state to accept this award, given to new school nurses with less than five years of experience who have demonstrated outstanding professionalism, passion for school health, growth in practice, and a significant impact on their students.

Rebecca Boutwell, our District Resource Nurse, will receive the Annie McKay Scholarship Award. Annie McKay was the first school nurse in Massachusetts.

In her memory, only two of these awards are given each year to school nurses who demonstrate a commitment to school nursing and are working to advance their practice and education through a Master's or Postgraduate Degree program.

A Request

Recently there has been a significant increase in caregivers and community members going directly to social media to share information about the school district.

While that is not something I can control, I do have a request. If you hear something that is school-related from a student, caregiver, or community member that is concerning in any way, please contact either the school or central office before going to social media.

Often, the information received is a buildup of hearsay that compounds over the course of a school day. When this information goes directly to social media, it causes a great deal of stress within the community and requires the administration to take a series of time-consuming steps to address what is often a non-issue because something was taken out of context.

If you contact the administration first, the issue can be addressed quickly, hopefully minimizing the stress and impact on the school community as a whole.

Again, you have the right to post whatever you want, but inaccurate or misinformed posts cause us to redirect our attention during the school day. Any cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

NMRHS Track

Beginning Monday, March 11th, the high school track will be open Monday through Friday from 5:30 am - 7:00 am for the remainder of the school year (provided we do not get additional snow). The only rules for using the track are:

1. No food or drink other than water
2. No pets
3. No bikes or strollers

Parking will be in a designated area in the lot near the field and closest to Route 119. Please utilize the coned area, as all other spots are reserved student spots.

Our facilities and grounds team will monitor this as they prepare for the day. If additional supervised opportunities become available, I will look to add additional hours in the late afternoon/evening.

If there are retired community members who would be interested in volunteering in the late afternoon/early evening for a potential tax credit, please reach out to: info@nmrsd.org.

MPY Parenting Solutions Library

Massachusetts Partnerships for Youth (MPY) is pleased to announce its new, free [***MPY Parenting Solutions Library***](#). MPY is offering the MPY Parenting Solutions Library in partnership with Peace At Home Parenting Solutions, a non-profit located in Mansfield, Connecticut. Peace At Home Parenting Solutions is a dynamic hub of trusted knowledge and compassionate support that inspires parents to create positive change for their children, their families and themselves. Through this new partnership, MPY is pleased to offer proven resources to help students' families thrive.

Peace At Home Parenting Solutions specializes in empowering parents with evidence-based strategies to foster nurturing connections that safeguard their children's mental well-being. When parents grasp the interconnection between the brain, body, and behavior, they experience reduced stress levels, resulting in less stress for their children.

The Peace At Home Parenting Solutions team, comprised of experts with advanced degrees, stays abreast of the latest advancements in child development. With more than 30 specialists focused on child and adolescent development, including specific issues such as difficulties in school, mental health challenges, neurodiversity, LGBTQ+ identity formation, handling racism, navigating grief, and other matters parents and our partners identify. These experts present easy-to-use strategies for long-lasting change.

Parents can watch or just listen to experts who get right to the point solving big and small challenges. The 24 library presentations focus on the topics below. Each presentation includes a 10-minute videos and handouts.

- Inspire School Success for Elementary, Middle and High School Students
- Parenting Principles for Progress Not Perfection
- Mental Health Knowledge and Skills
- Support Your Anxious Child Library
- ADHD and Autism: How to Help Your Child Thrive

The Home Parenting Library may easily be accessed using the link on MPY's [**home page \(www.mpyinc.org\)**](http://www.mpyinc.org). No log in or passcode is needed.

NM Jazz Band

On March 14th, the NM Jazz Band (and guests) will be performing at St. Anselm College in Manchester, NH, to open for a performance featuring Delfeayo Marsalis from 7 pm-9 pm at the Dana Center-Koonz Theatre.

Delfeayo is a Grammy winner, an NEA Jazz Master, and an immediate member of the highly acclaimed Marsalis family. The "first family of jazz" became prominent about forty years ago when Delfeayo's older brothers, Wynton and Branford, hit the scene. Now, along with the youngest brother, Jason, these musicians are among the world's most elite on their respective instruments.

More info on Delfeayo Marsalis: <https://www.dmarsalis.com/biography/>

Please consider supporting the NM Jazz Band at this exciting event!

2024-2025 School Year & School Bus Ridership

As many of you know, FY2025 will be financially challenging for many reasons.

As we look to be as fiscally responsible as possible, our primary goal is to manage the resources at our disposal in the best manner possible.

One of our main challenges is school bus transportation and its associated costs. As a regional school district, we are required to provide transportation for all students grades K-12 who live within two (2) miles of their assigned school. Since the pandemic, the number of students driven to school by family members or friends has increased dramatically, resulting in buses that are not near capacity.

After discussions with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education and the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools, NMRSD will require students who would like to utilize school transportation to **SIGN-UP** so that we only contract for the number of buses we require. If a student does not sign up, s/he will not be permitted to ride the bus. If a family changes its mind and takes advantage of school bus transportation, there may be a "waiting" period if a seat or bus is unavailable.

Please know that this is not meant to make getting students to and from school more difficult; rather, it is meant to manage our funding resources to serve our students best while keeping our taxpayers in mind.

All families who will have children in grades K-11 for the 2024-2025 school year **must** complete this by clicking the [survey](#) by Friday, April 26th.

NMRS Scholarship Foundation

Get ready to hit a home run with the NMRS Scholarship Foundation's Spring

Raffle! Purchase a \$10 raffle ticket to win four tickets to the Boston Red Sox vs. LA Angels games on April 13th at 4:10 p.m. and April 14th at 1:35 p.m. But that's not all – the lucky winner for each game will also receive a \$100 Visa Gift Card! Don't miss the opportunity to participate in this exciting event and contribute to a great cause—every raffle ticket is a valuable donation to the NMRS Scholarship Foundation.

The NMRS Scholarship Foundation invites you to support its annual scholarship drive for the class of 2024. If you or your business want to contribute a scholarship to a graduating NM senior this year, please reach out!

<https://nmrsscholarshipfoundation.weebly.com/>

Established in 1964, the Foundation has granted over a million dollars to NMRHS graduating seniors to advance their education. We are thrilled to commemorate 60 years of assisting NMRHS students!

As NMRHS parents, community members, student representatives, and school personnel, we are committed to fundraising to support our senior graduates as they pursue higher education. Through various initiatives such as fundraisers, memorial and business scholarships, and contributions from the community, we consistently raise over \$60,000 each year. These funds are then allocated as scholarships for North Middlesex Regional High School seniors seeking further education at technical or vocational schools, two-year colleges, four-year colleges, or universities.

Invitation & Information for the Mobile Polar Plunge - April 3rd

As we approach the date of our exciting mobile Polar Plunge on April 3rd, we are grateful for the positive engagement from the students and staff thus far!

We encourage your students to participate, and you can register them for the Plunge by visiting the [Polar Plunge Registration Page](#).

During registration, you can sign up as an individual plunge participant or as a larger group. This provides a fantastic opportunity for school clubs and sports teams to join in the fun. If your student decides to take the plunge, we kindly request a minimum fundraising commitment of \$50 per person. All funds raised will go directly to supporting Special Olympics Massachusetts and contribute to the growth of Unified Sports across the state.

The day promises to be filled with food trucks, music, and laughter, creating a vibrant atmosphere of positivity and inclusivity.

For more details, please watch the [North Middlesex Informational Video](#) and the [Special Olympics, Massachusetts, Informational Video](#).

Should you have any questions or require further information, click [here](#) or reach out to our NM Unified Sports coaches, Gerin Murphy (gmurphy@nmrsd.org), Mandy Connor (mconnor@nmrsd.org), and Jessica Boccelli (jboccelli@nmrsd.org). We are dedicated to making this event a success and a meaningful experience for our District. Thank you for your support!

Project Graduation

Project Graduation is an unforgettable all-night celebration meticulously organized by dedicated parents to ensure a secure and enjoyable environment for our graduating seniors. This annual event, not affiliated with the school, is transformed into a global spectacle with vibrant decorations portraying scenes from around the world. Our graduating seniors will be immersed in an exciting atmosphere filled with entertaining activities, fabulous prizes, and a continuous flow of delicious food throughout the night.

This extraordinary experience is made possible by the commitment of our volunteer parent committee, who work tirelessly to create an unforgettable night for our graduates. Given that Project Graduation is not affiliated with the school, the committee relies solely on donations, grants, and fundraising initiatives to bring this event to life. For more information, please click [here](#) or visit their website at <https://sites.google.com/view/nmrhs-projectgrad>

Student Opportunity Act

In 2019, Massachusetts passed the Student Opportunity Act, which focused on funding districts serving students with the greatest needs. The law included a critical provision requiring every district to set clear targets for improving disparities in achievement among student groups and develop a three-year plan to implement evidence-based strategies to meet their targets. The North Middlesex Regional School District is pleased to share its draft Student Opportunity Act (SOA) plan. This plan will focus on student learning and addressing disparities between specific student populations and our overall student data for the next three years (through June 2027) with the overall goal of providing ALL of our student learners with meaningful and powerful experiences to maximize their growth academically, socially, emotionally and behaviorally.

Based on public data that is available from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the enrollment size of each subgroup and the overall impact that the various indicators (absenteeism, suspensions, ninth-grade passing, dropouts, and graduation rates) were having on academic performance (MCAS), we decided to focus our work through this plan on students with disabilities.

Our Theory of Action is: If we identify and utilize research-based approaches to decrease school suspensions and identify alternative pathways for students

interested in dropping out for our students with disabilities subgroup, then we will see increased performance on state testing (MCAS) and an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities that meet the competency determination and graduation requirements within three years.

The District has selected the following Evidence-Based improvement areas to address the disparities in learning experiences and outcomes for the 'Students with Disabilities' subgroup. Funding to support these efforts are supported through both the curriculum office and special education department budgets:

- **1.1A - Promoting Integrated Services for Student Wellbeing** - Integrated Services for Student Wellbeing
- **1.2A - Implementing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that helps all students progress both academically and in their social, emotional, and behavioral development:** Effective Student Support Systems
- **2.2B - Using the MTSS process to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students, particularly students with disabilities and multilingual learners:** High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

The draft plan will be presented to the North Middlesex School Committee on March 14, 2024. The [presentation](#) and [draft plan](#) are available for your review. If you have any suggestions for the plan, be email Dr. Gary Burboa-Reese at gburboareese@nmrsd.org

NHS Tutoring Program

National Honor Society members dedicate their time to tutoring elementary, middle, and high school students. Tutoring sessions are held in town libraries after school from 3:00 pm-5:00 pm on weekdays and from 10:00 am-2:00 pm on Saturdays. You can find more specific details about days, times, and locations in the [Google Tutoring Form](#). High school students also have the option for tutoring after school from 2:00 pm-3:00 pm in the Commons or during flex block on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Once a student or parent completes the Google Form, we match them with a tutor and assist in scheduling their first tutoring session.

Outstanding School Lunch Balance

Townsend Ecumenical Outreach (TEO) recently contacted the district with an offer to help families who may have an outstanding school lunch balance. Families in this situation are encouraged to contact Kym at 978-877-6002 or info@teo-ma.org for support in satisfying outstanding balances.

Parents/Caregivers - Who to Contact

Very often, students and/or caregivers are unsure who to contact in the North Middlesex Regional School District in case of questions, concerns, or problems. Please direct these to the appropriate contact(s) below to ensure a prompt response.

*Classroom issues...*contact the teacher first. If you have additional concerns, contact the School counselor. If you are still concerned, contact the building Principal.

*Scheduling issues...*contact the School Counselor first. If you have additional concerns, contact the building Assistant Principal/Principal.

*Curriculum issues...*contact the appropriate teacher first. If you have additional concerns, contact the building Principal. Finally, contact the Assistant Superintendent's office.

*Special Education issues...*contact the appropriate teacher(s) first and then your son/daughter's special education liaison (listed on your child's IEP), if warranted. If you have additional concerns, contact the building Assistant Principal/Principal. Finally, contact the Student Services office.

*Behavioral issues...*contact the teacher first. If you are still concerned, contact the Guidance Counselor and then the building Assistant Principal/Principal.

*Social, emotional, personal, health, or family issues...*contact the School/Adjustment Counselor or the nurse to discuss your concerns with them. If necessary, also contact the building Assistant Principal/Principal. Contact the Student Services office if you feel your concern has gone unresolved.

Homeless or temporary housing (McKinney Vento Status): Contact the Guidance Counselor and inform them of your status. In some instances, they may direct you to the building Principal. Finally, contact the Student Services office. The homeless liaison (Brad Brooks) will be notified of the status, and transportation will be arranged through his office (if needed).

*Athletics issues...*contact the coach first. If you are still concerned, contact the Director of Athletics. Finally, contact the Principal.

*Attendance issues...*contact the School Counselor first. If attendance issues continue, contact the building Assistant Principal/Principal.

*Report Cards & Transcripts...*contact the School Counselor first. If you have additional questions, contact the building Assistant Principal/Principal.

*Harassment & Discrimination...*contact building Principal. If you are still concerned, contact the Title IX and VI Coordinators. Finally, contact the Human Resources office.

*Bullying...*contact the School Counselor. If you are still concerned, contact the building Assistant Principal/Principal.

*Technology questions and/or issues...*contact the district technology office.

*Student Activities/Clubs...*contact the advisor first. If you are still concerned, contact the building Assistant Principal/Principal.

*Special Education Transportation (VanPool Transportation)...*contact the Student Services office.

*Transportation (Dee Bus)...*contact the building secretary, followed by the building Assistant Principal/Principal. Finally, contact the business office.

*Food Service...*contact the Food Services Manager. Finally, contact the business office.

*Ethics Questions...*contact the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission. The Commission's Legal Division provides free, confidential advice to anyone subject to the conflict of interest law. To obtain advice from the Commission, call (617) 371-9500 or (888) 485-4766 or request advice online.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/state-ethics-commission-frequently-asked-questions>

*District Policies...*contact your School Committee representative or the committee chairperson.

For email contact to a specific faculty, staff, or committee member, please enter the person's first initial and last name @nmrsd.org, for example, jdoe@nmrsd.org.

2023-2024 NMRSD Administrative Team

Name	Role	School
Anne Cromwell-Gapp	Principal Extended Day Program Coordinator	AES
Kate Guziejka	Principal	SMS

Stephanie Thompson	Assistant Principal	SMS
Ami Dolan	Principal	VBES
Lisa Comeau	Interim Assistant Principal	VBES
Chantele Olmstead	Principal	HBMS
Jason White	Assistant Principal	HBMS
Lauren Young	Principal	NMS
Evan Worth	Assistant Principal	NMS
Tim McMahon	Principal	NMRHS
Laurie Smith	Assistant Principal	NMRHS
Ryan Demar	Assistant Principal	NMRHS
Matt Dawson	Athletic Director & Facility Rentals	NMRHS
David Amari	Director of Facilities and Grounds	District
Cathryn Hampson	Supervisor of Health Services	District
Jeremy Hamond	Director of Operations Technology Facility Use Student Registration	District
Nancy Haines	Business Manager	District
Anne Marie Tucciarone-Mahan	Director of Human Resources Title VI/IX Coordinator for Staff	District
Brad Brooks	Director of Student Services Special Education Counseling Homeless Liaison	District

	ADA Compliance Officer	
John Judge	Assistant Director of Special Education Out-of-District Coordinator SECC Administrative Supervisor	District
Diane Gleason	Administrative Coach Grant Writer	District
Margaret Desilets	Evaluation Team Leader	District
Gary Burboa-Reese	Assistant Superintendent Homeschooling Title VI/IX Coordinator for Students	District
Kevin Cormier	Director of STEM (Math, Science, & Engineering)	District
Brad Morgan	Superintendent	District

2023-2024 School Committee Meeting Dates

For now, all sub-committee and most school committee meetings will continue to be virtual as we continue to receive feedback that it is more convenient for the public to attend. Attendance at school committee meetings is one of the best ways to remain current with district policy, budgetary matters, and news.

Unless noted otherwise, all meetings are held on Thursday evenings and begin at 6:00 p.m. For the full docket of meetings, please click on the link below:

[SC Meeting Calendar.pdf](#)

Please note these dates are subject to change as committee business necessitates.

2023-2024 School Calendar

For the full 2023-2024 school calendar, please click the link below:

[School Calendar](#)

2023-2024 Caregiver-Teacher Conferences (March)

Due to the feedback we received, this year will be a little different than the past couple of years and will be as follows:

Elementary will encourage in-person but offer virtual if requested.

Middle will remain virtual.

Please keep in mind that while these are scheduled conference blocks, caregivers can request, either through the teacher or a guidance counselor, a meeting as well. Every effort needs to be made to ensure that these requests are granted in a timely manner.