

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING

High School Library, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

Monday, November 4, 2024

Present: Sarah Hall, Juliet Walker, Andrew Boger, Brian Callahan, Kathleen Shaw and Breanna Higgins

Absent: Mayor Sean Reardon

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Sarah Hall called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:30 PM. Roll call found all members present, except Mayor Sean Reardon. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

Nicole Whelan, 12 Lafayette Street (cell phones)

CONSENT AGENDA

Warrants

Motion:

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Sarah Hall it was

VOTED: to approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following Warrant:

Warrant 8135	\$421,427.72
A-Warrant	\$ <u>14,664.18</u>
	\$436,091.90

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Minutes

Motion:

On a motion by Breanna Higgins and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to accept the minutes of the October 21, 2024 School Committee Business meeting as presented.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Student Representative Report

Logan MacKnight presented the student report that included the upcoming Veteran’s Day assembly at the Bresnahan, learning about erosion at the Molin, the Jack-O-Light Night family event at the Nock, lessons on the election at the high school, as well as fall plays at NHS and the Nock. (attached)

NHS International Trips 2025-2026

Principal Andy Wulf provided a few statistics for this year's international trips, such as # of students participating, scholarships, donations and the sign up process. This was followed by a review of travel dates, anticipated costs, and basic itineraries for the following four international trips proposed for 2025-2026: England/Scotland, Peru, German Exchange and Belgium/Netherlands.

Motion:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Juliet Walker it was

VOTED: to approve the high school international trips for 2025-2026 in accordance with Policy JJH – Student Overnight or Late Night Travel.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

MSBA Invite into the Accelerated Repair Program

Superintendent Gallagher explained the initial application process and MSBA's site visit to the Nock and high school this summer, which led to the official invitation into the ARP for both schools in late October. Facilities Director James McSweeney provided a brief summary of the next steps and future important deadlines.

Strategic Plan Year in Review 2023-2024

Superintendent Sean Gallagher thanked his Superintendent's Advisory Council members for their assistance all year with various projects, including their recent input to the year-end report. He introduced six Council members who shared their personal experiences and thoughts of the importance of Portrait of a Graduate and success of the strategic plan. Ray Felts (technology & soft skills), Marianne Vesey (social-emotional culture), Scott Yewell (community led dialogue & special classes), Emily Stroehrer (special education), and Nicole Chabot (dyslexia).

An overview of the district's Strategic Plan key accomplishment areas for 2023-2024 was provided by Superintendent Sean Gallaher, which included academic highlights, student voice and leadership, community partnerships, MTSS, college data, and key investments/outcomes.

Proposal for Instruction and Learning Subcommittee - draft

Juliet Walker reviewed the description of this new subcommittee proposed by Mayor Sean Reardon. Breanna Higgins and Andy Boger were in favor of moving forward with the proposal and having a group that is focused on student learning. Juliet Walker recommended holding off on approval as the Mayor was unable to attend this meeting. Sarah Hall will have this topic with a vote on the next meeting agenda.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Finance Subcommittee

Brian Callahan reported the committee met on October 10th and discussed the budget process, GoFan payment process, and reviewed the list of student activity account balances. The next meeting is scheduled for November 14th. Juliet Walker requested a list of the student activity account balances be shared with the School Committee.

Policy Subcommittee

1st Read

Juliet Walker presented a new policy (EHAA – District Security Relating to Technology), and reviewed recommended revisions to existing policies KCD – Public Gifts to the Schools, and BHE – Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee members.

2nd Read

Juliet Walker reviewed proposed changes to Policy JJF – Student Activity Accounts.

Motion:

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Andy Boger it was

VOTED: to approve policy JJF – Student Activity Accounts as presented.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Communications Subcommittee

Andy Boger reported the members met last week and discussed the budget listening session.

Superintendent's Report

GoFans Ticket Sales Update: Middle school students will be able to obtain paper tickets to home games. Parents will be provided with designated pick up times to meet with Athletic department staff to obtain a paper ticket (i.e. day before or day of a game).

Business Manager Update: Superintendent Sean Gallagher reported the position went out to bid and a few responses have been received.

Negotiations: IBB negotiations are underway; session #2 was just completed and went well.

Follow-up

SEPAC: Kathleen Shaw reported there is a SEPAC meet & greet scheduled for November 14th at 5:30PM in the Nock library. Officer elections will take place.

Cell Phones/Technology Use Update:

Nock Principal Nick Markos reported their “phone away” policy is effective. Feedback from parents and the School Council has been good. Technology violations this year were 12, of which 10 occurred outside of the classroom time. *High School Principal Andy Wulf* explained the policy for grades 9-12 is “phones away during instructional time”. All classrooms have shoe holders to store cell phones, which are also used to track attendance. He is working with the student council, school council, teachers and students to have “educational components” to help students self-regulate using their phone. Principal Wulf is also talking with Technology about possible iPad restrictions, and with students about possible cell phone free lunch days.

Member Ethics & Communications: Vice Chair Sarah Hall reminded everyone to follow the Communications policy (BHE-R), and the chain of command. Lisa Furlong will have Technology look into adding the following disclaimer on school committee emails: *“The opinions expressed within this email are my own and do not reflect those of the School Committee as a whole. The School Committee has no involvement in matters of personnel. Complaints of this nature should be directed through the district chain of command (teacher, principal then Superintendent).”*

District Website Update: Lisa Furlong explained the district is still working on the roll over to a new platform. Currently the district is maintaining two sites at the same time, as the site that was hosting the district originally was bought out.

Hybrid Meeting Format: Topic tabled until the next meeting. Brian Callahan stated he has the equipment. Next steps are to figure out who will be responsible for setting up and running the equipment at meetings.

New Business:

Joint City Council/School Committee Budget meeting: Juliet Walker would like to have a collaborative meeting where both groups talk together about priorities and challenges.

New CIP Rating System: Sarah Hall and Brian Callahan were recently invited to a City Hall meeting to provide input/feedback on a new planning system that will provide weighted ratings for items on the CIP. The City will provide a full presentation next week.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 8:48PM and move to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing possible contract negotiations and/or legal matters, and will not reconvene in open session.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Roll Call Vote

School Committee Member	Vote
Mayor Sean Reardon	absent
Sarah Hall	Yes
Andrew Boger	Yes
Brian Callahan	Yes
Breanna Higgins	Yes
Kathleen Shaw	Yes
Juliet Walker	Yes

Submitted by: Logan MacKnight

Location: NHS Library

Bresnahan News:

We are hosting our annual Veteran's Day Assembly this Friday at 8:45 am. We have approximately 20 local veterans visiting us. Bresnahan students will present at the assembly, sing together and share gratitude for our community veterans who serve our country. This is a very special event for the whole school and we are looking forward to it.

This is our 2nd year with iReady Mathematics as our math curriculum. Students are strengthening their skills by explaining their thinking to classmates and listening to other people's strategies. This week 3rd graders were sharing ways they could use arrays to solve multiplication equations. When playing games at home, have your child share their thinking for strategies they used (or calculations made)!

Students have begun earning tokens for the NEF Book Vending Machine. For the first term, students will work on completing a level in Lexia, one of our digital literacy resources. Every Friday we announce the students who have earned a token and they come to use the vending machine. This has been a lot of fun! Students are filled with joy and wonder as they choose a book. They engage in turn taking and cooperation while using the vending machine in a group of peers. One frequently asked question is, "Do I get to keep this book?" The answer is YES! Thanks to the NEF we are excited to gift these books to students.

Molin News:

The Sustainability and Climate Innovation Learning Lab visited the Molin and 4th graders continued their hands-on learning of erosion.

The Molin had a fun Halloween Parade attended by many families.

After the parade the students attended local nursing homes spreading Halloween joy.

Nock News:

I'm excited to share that our recent Jack-O-Light Night was a tremendous success, drawing over 350 attendees! This event truly was a home run, thanks to the hard work and dedication of our 7th-grade students and teachers.

When speaking with students about what made the event so special, many highlighted its impact on school spirit and community. Comments included:

- "School was fun again."

- "I got to work with students I typically don't collaborate with to help plan this event."
- "It was a true team effort."

It was wonderful to see our community come together, fostering connections and celebrating our school spirit.

Upcoming Events: Nock Fall Play

I also want to remind everyone not to miss the Nock Fall Play, a rendition of *Badger*. Performances will take place this Wednesday and Thursday, both starting at 6 PM. It promises to be an engaging show, and I encourage everyone to come out and support our talented students.

High School News:

Last week the seniors delivered lessons for our underclassmen to learn about the issues of the election, understand the different perspectives on a range of issues, and know where each candidate stands on the issue. They facilitated these conversations during last week's Clipper Block. The lessons were a product of weeks of research and participating in their dialogues to truly understand the varying viewpoints around many of the points being discussed with this year's election.

Alongside their work to help the public become certified in CPR, the Red Cross Club is also making plans for how our school will recognize Veterans Day. On November 13, the club will host a Veteran Panel Discussion and Reception for our students. This will happen during the Clipper Block. After the panel discussion, students will have the opportunity to mingle with the speakers at the reception. Students and staff are all invited to sign-up for this event.

The Global Citizenship Program held a workshop in October Exploring Cultural Identity through Poetry with guest poets Rhina Espaillat who shared about her Dominican roots and Princess Moon who is the daughter of Cambodian refugees escaping the genocide. After readings and discussions, students had a poetry writing workshop, writing their own cultural identity poems. Students on the Dominican Republic trip and members of Poetry Soup were invited to join. Teachers Aileen Maconi and Debra Szabo organized the event. Funds were provided through an NEF grant.

Newburyport High School Theatre Department presents *THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG* November 16-23, 2024 at the NHS Institution for Savings Auditorium. This hilarious comedy premiered in London's West End in 2012, and is from the writers of "The Goes Wrong Show" on BBC. This show is 100% appropriate for ALL AUDIENCES, and is sure to deliver belly-laughs abound! Tickets will be available at the door 30-minutes before curtain, and will be General Admission (flyer attached). *The cast and crew of 30 students would love to see you there! We will hold a complimentary ticket for all School Committee members, simply mention your name at the Box Office!*