REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7

Newbury Library Media Center

Board of Education Meeting

November 12, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.

APPROVED 12.10.25

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Kim Crone (N), Ms. Terri Kenneson (C), Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Deb Bell (N), Secretary / Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Student Representatives, Ms. Amaya Washington and Ms. Mia Doyle, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins, High School Principal Mr. Gary Franklin, Middle School Principal Mr. Ryan Cornelius, and Superintendent Steven K. LePage.

Absent: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Ms. Sexton Read. Public attendees were welcomed; no public comment was made.

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2. Approval of Minutes

> MOTION by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Ms. Bell, to APPROVE the October 8th, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes, as amended. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. MOTION PASSED.

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3. Student Reports

Student representatives provided updates:

- **Mia Doyle reported:**
  - First-quarter grades finalized; student councils collaborated for Veterans' Day breakfast and Thanksgiving food drives.
  - Fall sports concluded successfully; winter sports are beginning to meet.
  - Underclassmen have begun to receive PSAT results and will begin to prepare for SATs.

- **Amaya Washington reported:**
    - Student activities included yearbook photos, turkey drive, book drive, and Principal's Advisory Council projects.
    - Ongoing painting and setup for new wellness space; furniture is ready.
    - Veterans' Day assembly and breakfast were successful and well-attended.

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4. Principal Reports

Middle School:

- Shared year-over-year academic growth data showing improvement in math and ELA.
- Math achievement increased by 8% and growth rate by 5%.
- Science scores declined; the department is implementing new assessment and instructional strategies.
- MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) programs continue to expand; strong data tracking and parent communication noted.
- Positive behavior programs such as "Highlander of the Month" continue to build school culture.
- Upcoming focus areas include writing support and alignment of athletic programs with high school standards.

High School:

- Reported significant improvement in SAT and PSAT scores:
    - Seniors averaged 1037 (vs. 969 CT average, 965 national).
    - PSAT scores show strong growth among juniors and sophomores.
    - Current freshmen scores are promising, coming in higher than any other recent class.
- AP testing results: 84% pass rate (score of 3+), with an increased number of students taking an AP exam, the highest in five years.
- Science scores increased from 51% to 64% meeting or exceeding standards.
- Teachers and departments commended for their efforts, resulting in high-level student achievement.

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5. Superintendent's Report

- **Teacher Negotiations:** Tentative agreement reached in three meetings; to be ratified by NTA and approved by the Board in December.
- **Administrative Collaboration:** Strong partnership between Principals Franklin and Cornelius commended; close alignment in practices and goals is leading to school and district improvements.
- **Canton Partnership:** Canton designated Northwestern as its sole school of choice for future students interested in attending an Agricultural Science Program.
- **Strategic Planning:** Committees continuing to analyze data to align goals with the district's Vision of the Graduate; presentations will be shared at the workshop on November 24, along with a review of the Thought Exchange survey findings.
- **Regional Instructional Rounds:** Successful collaboration continues across districts through the K-8 Curriculum Council. Northwestern recently hosted instructional rounds to send district teachers and school leaders to observe our math instruction, with the goal of enhancing understanding and improving instruction. District rounds will take place in the elementary schools later in the year. Ongoing rounds continue with the Northwestern Instructional Leadership team, now including department heads.
- **Facilities Study:** Planning underway with Arcadis to prepare an RFP to solicit bids for a facility study, expected to cost approximately $25,000. This study will be critical in guiding future capital projects.
- **OSHA Review:** After the formal review was conducted and the meeting with the OSHA rep was held, we await the formal report in early December. Ongoing compliance improvement efforts have been underway, with more work to come; positive progress is being led by Dr. DeCerbo - District Chemical Hygiene Officer, and others.
- **Veterans Day:** Record attendance and strong student participation in both middle and high school events, a great day we can be proud of, but continue to build from. House of Heroes Project is to take place in Winsted with 28 students and several adults on November 19.

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6. Director of Finance & Operations Report

- **Roof Project:** Nearly complete; awaiting caulking and gutter installation.
- **Security & Infrastructure Project:** Nearing completion; includes 120 digital clocks, 275 speakers, over 30 strobe lights, and updated emergency notification systems.
- **Budget Updates:**
    - FY24–25: On target; no major issues.
    - FY26–27: Department budget requests due; no unexpected expenses projected at this time.

- **Facilities Assessment:** reiterated information shared by the Superintendent. The RFP for a facility study will be used to identify future capital needs and support bond planning.

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7. Administrative Contracts

- Board Chair Sexton Read noted ongoing negotiations with the administrators' association; expected a tentative agreement by the end of the week, and also needed Board approval at the December 10 meeting.

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8. Strategic Planning Update (Board Discussion)

- Subcommittees are identifying top priorities across leadership, learning assessment, and curriculum.
- Final meeting to consolidate recommendations set for **November 24**.
- The plan will serve as a roadmap for district improvement, not a binding document.

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9. 2026–2027 Academic Calendar

Draft calendar approved unanimously, pending addition of two high school parent-teacher conference nights (to be amended post-contract ratification).

MOTION by Ms. Crone, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to APPROVE the Proposed 2026-2027 School Year Calendar, as presented. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. MOTION PASSED.

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10. Resignation

- **Dr. Steven Carvalho**, Special Education administrator, submitted his resignation effective December 23, 2025, to accept a position at Berkshire Community College.

  MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Bell, to ACCEPT, with gratitude, Dr. Steven Carvalho's resignation letter, as presented. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. MOTION PASSED.

- **17 applicants** have submitted applications for the open position thus far.

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11. Cancellation of Upcoming Meeting

MOTION by Ms. Bell, seconded by Ms. Crone, to CANCEL the November 26, 2025, Regular Board of Education Meeting. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. MOTION PASSED.

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12. Upcoming Meeting

- **Next Regular Meeting:** December 10, 2025
    - Organizational meeting and contract ratifications (teachers & administrators)
    - It was mentioned that the next meeting would be the Board clerk's last, as it will be the start of her maternity leave

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13. Adjournment

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Gauthier, to ADJOURN at 7:15 p.m. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None.

MOTION PASSED.
