

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE NORWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

November 24, 2025

A meeting of the Norwell School Committee was held on Monday, November 24, 2025. The School Committee met in the Meeting Room at Norwell Public Library. Vice Chair Kristin McEachern called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Present were Vice Chair Christina Kane, Ms. McEachern, Lisa DiFrisco, and Superintendent Matthew Keegan. Clerk Alison Link arrived at 7:35 p.m. Mr. Scott Dyke was absent.

At 6:35 p.m., Ms. McEachern moved that the meeting go into executive session for purposes of strategizing non-union personnel strategy and collective bargaining negotiations and to return to open session at the conclusion of executive session. The motion was seconded by Ms. DiFrisco and passed unanimously on a roll-call vote: McEachern, Aye, Kane, Aye, and DiFrisco, Aye. The Committee moved to Study Room 3. Executive session concluded at 6:58 p.m., and the Committee returned to the regular meeting in the Meeting Room.

Ms. Kane moved, seconded by Ms. DiFrisco, to approve the consent agenda including the minutes of the Executive and Regular sessions of the Norwell School Committee meeting on October 20, 2025 and Accounts Payable Warrants #17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and Refund Warrant #19 signed by Ms. Kristin McEachern, and the amended (increase in # of students) international excursion to Italy on April 15 – 26, 2026, as proposed. The motion was approved unanimously: McEachern, Aye, Kane, Aye, and DiFrisco, Aye.

FY'27 Budget Assumptions and Priorities were included in agenda packets. A few of the areas that will have an impact on the budgeting process were highlighted by Mr. Keegan. Ms. Kane moved, seconded by Ms. DiFrisco, to adopt, for budget planning purposes, the FY'27 Budget Assumptions and Priorities, as proposed. The motion was approved unanimously: McEachern, Aye, Kane, Aye, and DiFrisco, Aye.

Director of Teaching, Learning & Technology Meredith Erickson reviewed Policy IKFB: Competency Determination Requirements, a copy of which was included in agenda packets. Ms. Kane made a motion, seconded by Ms. DiFrisco, to approve Policy IKFB for second and final reading, as proposed. The motion was approved unanimously: McEachern, Aye, Kane, Aye, and DiFrisco, Aye.

Student Government Representative Isabel Belisle recapped happenings at the high school including homecoming week, sports and the *Mama Mia* performance. A mini spirit week and pep rally are being held the week of November 24.

Executive Director Michael Losche from the South Shore Education Collaborative presented information on the creation of a SSEC Capital Reserve Account. A letter outlining the specifications was included in agenda packets. Mr. Keegan, as a SSEC Board member, recommends a capital reserve account. Ms. Kane made the motion, seconded by Ms. DiFrisco, to approve the establishment of a SSEC Capital Reserve Account with specifications, as proposed. The motion was approved unanimously: McEachern, Aye, Kane, Aye, and DiFrisco, Aye.

Mr. Keegan reviewed the NESDEC Enrollment Projection Reports from the fall of 2025 and 2024 which were included in agenda packets. Differences between the reports and long-term projection numbers were discussed. Mr. Keegan expressed concern about the projections on the incoming kindergarten class. If the numbers hold true, Norwell Public Schools may need to add one or two kindergarten teachers.

The FY'26 First Quarter Budget Report was included in agenda packets. Director of Finance, Operations & Technology presented a PowerPoint and stated the budget is mainly on target at this time. NPS will continue to work as the year progresses to manage all areas of the budget.

The Congress of Councils was held on October 21, 2025. In an effort to share some of the Congress of Councils' main priorities and provide a preliminary view of this year's budget drivers, Mr. Keegan enclosed a PowerPoint in Agenda packets to outline these areas for consideration. A copy of the Congress of Councils Priority sheet was shared in the Google drive. Information from Congress of Councils will be captured in the initial budget and refined for the executive budget which will be presented to the Committee in January 2026.

Director of Student Services Suzan Theodorou presented an overview and update on the Office of Student Services including special education philosophy, goals planned and completed, accountability status, and IEP enrolment status. The PowerPoint regarding the Student Services department was included in agenda packets.

Mr. Keegan and Mr. MacCallum attended a three-day *Built for Learning* conference held by AASA in conjunction with *Sourcewell*. The conference agenda and summary of presentations was included in agenda packets. The conference focused on school design to promote buildings that are healthy and promote learning; information on how to incorporate safety through the physical structure, technology, and prevention tools; and finally, resources on how to procure resources and finance them. There were many tips on what to make sure design architects are aware of when planning a new building and/or feasibility study for long-term planning. Connections were made that will help Norwell Public Schools move forward with MSBA planning, as well as creating a strategic capital plan to address all facility needs over time.

Mr. Keegan and the Committee members commented positively on the *Mamma Mia* play, the National Honor Society ceremony at Norwell High School, the Middle Schools' Turkey Trot and the soccer and football games. The Committee commended the Boosters for providing busses to the tournaments.

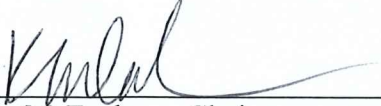
Chair McEachern opened the meeting for public comment on agenda items, and Ms. Mary Lou O'Leary, 222 River Street commented on the *State of the Schools* message to the community. Mr. John McGrath, 15 Brantwood Road, on behalf of the Select Board, and as a Norwell resident, addressed the Committee regarding the *FY'27 budget*.

Chair McEachern opened the meeting for public comment on non-agenda items, and Ms. Kara Vautour, 256 Pine Street read and addressed the Committee from a prepared statement with concerns regarding the FY'26 budget and School Committee meeting locations. Ms. O'Leary returned to the podium to share information and comments on public comments and locations of meetings. Ms. Sheeren Bellinghausen, 29 Hillcrest Circle, commented that as a member of the Vinal PTO she suggested using the PTO members and fellow parents as messengers as a vehicle to educate/share information on NPS.

Mr. Keegan noted information in the Google folder: School newsletters published since the October 20 meeting; letter to staff regarding 403 (B) Administrators; acknowledgement of retirement letter; November 7 Enrollment and Average Class Size Reports; and the Chamber of Commerce will have their breakfast meeting in January with a date to be determined.

The Cole School Presentation meeting will be held at the Norwell Public Library on December 15, 2025.

There being no further business to come before the Committee in open session, at 8:42 p.m., Ms. Link moved to adjourn.



Kristin A. McEachern, Chair

December 15, 2025



Alison L. Link, Clerk

December 15, 2025