



NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Ashby – Pepperell – Townsend, Massachusetts

MEETING MINUTES – February 24, 2026
 Virtual via Zoom

PRESENT

Chairperson	Lisa Martin	Member, At-Large
	Kym Craven	Member, Townsend ~ Joined @ 6:05 p.m.
	Qenan Francois	Member, Townsend
	Jacqueline (Jackie) White	Member, Pepperell
	Michael LaBossiere	Member, Pepperell
	Alexander (Alex) Bankuti	Member, Pepperell
	Randee Rusch	Member, At-Large
	Lisa Bloom	Member, At Large
	Carla Lima	Member, Ashby ~ Joined @ 6:04 p.m.

ALSO PRESENT

Brad Morgan	Superintendent of Schools
Gary Burboa-Reese	Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Haines	Business Manager
Kevin Cormier	Asst. Business Manager
Robin Eibye	Recording Secretary
Jeremy Hamond	Director of Operations
Erin Upton	Director of Special Education

1. Chairperson Lisa Martin opened the meeting at 6:01 p.m., and announced the meeting would be recorded.
2. Ms. Martin said NMRSD School Committee's next meeting would be held in person on March 10, 2026.

Roll Call:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	-	Randee Rusch	Yes
Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes
Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	-
Michael LaBossiere	Yes		

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- Michael LaBossiere motioned, and Lisa Bloom seconded to vote and approve the consent agenda excluding the January 29, 2026 minutes.

OUR MISSION: At NM, we are committed to creating a diverse learning environment where students are provided a meaningful education through academic, social, and emotional learning experiences. Together with parents, caregivers, and the community, students are encouraged to ignite and embrace their individual potential to find success within NM and beyond.

Roll Call Vote:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	-	Randee Rusch	Yes
Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes
Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	Yes
Michael LaBossiere	Yes		

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 6/0/0.

A discussion ensued about meeting minutes dated January 29, 2026, and Randee Rusch’s request to amend the minutes. Members reviewed Robin Eibye’s proposal dated February 19, 2026.

- Qenan Francois motioned, and Michael LaBossiere seconded to vote and accept Robin Eibye’s proposed amendments to the January 29, 2026 minutes.

Roll Call Vote:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	Yes	Randee Rusch	Yes
Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes
Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	Yes
Michael LaBossiere	Yes		

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 7/0/0.

- Qenan Francois motioned, and Michael LaBossiere seconded to vote and accept the January 29, 2026 minutes as amended.

Roll Call Vote:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	Yes	Randee Rusch	Yes
Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes

Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	Yes
Michael LaBossiere	Yes		

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 7/0/0.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

- Robin Eibye confirmed there was no one present for public comment.

REPORTS/INFORMATION ITEMS – VOTES MAY BE TAKEN

1. Chairperson’s Report – L. Martin

- None

2. Superintendent’s Report – B. Morgan

- Superintendent Morgan expressed appreciation to Dave Amari and the North Middlesex Building & Grounds Department for their exceptional snow removal efforts this winter. Despite significant snowfall and equipment challenges, the team ensured that school properties were safely cleared and operational. Unlike many districts that outsource snow removal, these responsibilities are managed internally, and the department was commended for proactively addressing snow relocation and ongoing property maintenance.

Congratulations were extended to Cathryn Hampson, who was named the 2026 Anne Sheetz Leadership/Education/Research Award recipient by the Massachusetts School Nurses Organization (MSNO). This award recognizes excellence in advocacy, collaboration, dissemination of best practices, professionalism, research, and leadership in school health.

Congratulations were also extended to Laurie Sheridan of Hawthorne Brook, who was selected as the 2026 MSNO School Nurse of the Year.

- Chair, Lisa Martin recognized and commended the district’s nursing staff for their outstanding contributions.

3. Assistant Superintendent’s Report – G. Burboa-Reese

- **Strategic Plan Update** – Dr. Burboa-Reese provided a high-level update on progress toward Strategic Plan goals.

Key Updates:

- The district received a grant to implement the Democratic Knowledge Project (DKP) in Grade 8.
- The state introduced the *Investigating History* curriculum in Grades 3 and 4. NMRSD teachers are currently attending professional development with implementation planned for next school year.
- Continued emphasis on high-quality instructional practices and professional development across grade levels.

- Ongoing work to build educator working groups to evaluate curriculum materials.

Portrait of a Learner

- Development of a Portrait of a Learner model with defined core competencies and articulated learning expectations.
- High school Professional Learning Community days and early-release/late-start PD are focused on this work.
- Departments are defining what competencies look like across content areas and how students demonstrate mastery.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

- Leadership team receiving professional development.
- Reported reduction in special education referrals and increased use of interventions prior to evaluation.
- Data will be compiled and presented in a summer progress report.

Additional Strategic Priorities

- Formation of a gifted and talented task force.
- Strengthening comprehensive counseling programming, particularly for post-secondary planning.
- Continued development of instructional access for multilingual learners.
- Expansion of districtwide family engagement beyond Title I.
- Ongoing efforts to improve communication and proactively share positive district news.

- Title I Family Literacy Night

Dr. Burboa-Reese reported the second annual Title I Family Literacy Night will take place on March 4th from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., in the NM Regional High School Commons and Annex. Dr. Burboa-Reese commended Title I staff and thanked Ms. Comeau, Director of Title I, for coordinating the event.

NEW BUSINESS/GENERAL DISCUSSION – VOTES MAY BE TAKEN

1. Annual Review of Safety Protocols

- Superintendent Morgan confirmed the Annual Review of Safety Protocols was moved to March 10, 2026.

2. Pre-K Tuition – E. Upton

- Director of Special Education, Erin Upton recommended no change to Pre-K tuition rates for FY27. A discussion ensued about tuition history, enrollment, program structure, and the STEPS program. The Discussion included whether lower tuition could improve enrollment.

➤ *Qenan Francois motioned, and Lisa Bloom seconded to vote and agree to maintain the current Pre-K tuition rates for the 2026-2027 school year.*

Roll Call Vote:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	Yes	Randee Rusch	Abstain

Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes
Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	Abstain
Michael LaBossiere	Yes		

Vote: The motion passed 5/0/2.

3. Van Pool Contract Extension – E. Upton

- Director of Special Education, Erin Upton provided an update on Van Pool transportation and stated they are continuously working to improve their systems and processes. Ms. Upton noted that Van Pool had purchased 54 new vehicles. Upton noted Van Pool’s current contract was set to expire this June, with an optional two-year extension. It was confirmed there was a 5% increase for fiscal years 2025 and 2026. Upton said she secured a 4% increase for fiscal years 2027 and 2028. The committee discussed mileage and fuel costs, and it was confirmed the district is not charged for the mileage, but by the van.
- *Michael LaBossiere motioned, and Qenan Francois seconded to vote and accept the Van Pool two-year contract extension for fiscal year 2027 and 2028.*

Roll Call Vote:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	Abstain	Randee Rusch	Yes
Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes
Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	Yes
Michael LaBossiere	Yes		

Vote: The motion passed 6/0/1.

4. Letter to Legislators – L. Martin

- Chair Martin inquired if the committee was interested in once again sending a letter to legislators regarding funding reform. Ms. Martin agreed to draft the letter and present to the Legislative Advocacy Subcommittee for review.

5. FY26 Nashoba Valley Community Health Grant – G. Burboa-Reese

- Dr. Burboa-Reese stated the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts awarded NMRSD \$20,000 through its FY26 Nashoba Valley Community Health Grant, the maximum available. The grant supports programs improving access to quality health care across the region. Our proposal focused on expanding behavioral health supports for students, including a dedicated space for virtual therapy sessions, Mental Health First Aid training for staff, and a Fall 2026 community health fair to promote preventative care.

- Qenan Francois motioned, and Lisa Bloom seconded to vote to accept the FY26 Nashoba Valley Community Health grant in the amount of \$20,000.

Roll Call Vote:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	Yes	Randee Rusch	Yes
Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes
Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	Yes
Michael LaBossiere	Yes		

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 7/0/0.

OLD BUSINESS

1. 2026-27 School Year Calendar Revised – B. Morgan
 - Superintendent Morgan presented the revised 2026-27 School Year Calendar and said there was formula issue with the first calendar and a mix-up with the Labor Day holiday.
- Qenan Francois motioned, and Lisa Bloom seconded to vote and approve the revised 2026-2027 School District Calendar as presented.

Roll Call Vote:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	Yes	Randee Rusch	Yes
Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes
Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	Yes
Michael LaBossiere	Yes		

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 7/0/0.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS – VOTES MAY BE TAKEN

1. Finance – K. Craven
 - Kym Craven provided an update and said the Finance Subcommittee was scheduled to meet tomorrow, February 25th. Craven said the committee was scheduled to review transfers, remaining balances, and the FY27 budget.
2. Policy – R. Rusch

- Randee Rusch said she was pulling policy JH-R Student Travel Regulations from the agenda and will bring it back together with policy JJH, which is the main policy

3. Legislative Advocacy – Q. Francois

- Jennifer Forrs shared an update on a community advocacy group working across Groton, Dunstable, Lunenburg, and North Middlesex. The group has been active for several years, supporting school funding initiatives, including the recent supplemental funding secured through persistent advocacy. They organize conferences, panel discussions, and State House meetings to raise awareness about funding challenges and encourage community involvement. The group partners with regional organizations like Project 211, the MTA, and local unions to amplify their efforts. Community members—whether parents or concerned residents—are encouraged to participate, attend meetings, or submit letters to influence state funding decisions and support local schools.

4. SC Operations

- None

5. Community Outreach & Town Liaisons

- Ashby – C. Lima
 - None
- Pepperell – L. Martin
 - Andrew MacLean requested the district bring down the proposed budget. Chair Martin said she would forward Mr. MacLean’s letter to committee members.
- Townsend – Q. Francois/R. Rusch

OTHER BUSINESS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED WITHIN 48 HOURS OF MEETING – VOTES MAY BE TAKEN

- *Michael LaBossiere motioned, and Kym Craven seconded to vote to adjourn.*

Roll Call Vote:			
Lisa Martin	Yes	Alexander Bankuti	-
Kym Craven	Yes	Randee Rusch	Yes
Qenan Francois	Yes	Lisa Bloom	Yes
Jackie White	-	Carla Lima	Yes
○ Michael LaBossiere	○ Y e s	○	○

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 7/0/0.

ACTION ITEMS & COMMITTEE GUIDANCE

1. Van Pool Contract – Follow-up on Rates

- Erin Upton to ask Van Pool whether, given current fuel and cost conditions, any additional rate consideration or adjustment is possible beyond the 4% contractual minimum for FY27-28.
- 2. Conference & Travel Budget Review
 - Finance Subcommittee and Administration. Randeë Rusch requested a review of the conference and travel lines versus comparable districts and consider whether savings can be redirected toward classroom staffing.
- 3. Town of Pepperell Budget Request
 - Lisa Martin to forward the email from Pepperell Town Administrator, Andrew MacLean requesting budget reduction/consideration.
- 4. Town of Townsend Select Board Follow-Up
 - Randeë Rusch/Qenan Francois to obtain details from Townsend Select Board regarding any letter or position about the school budget and share with the Finance Subcommittee.
- 5. Advocacy Group Contact Information Distribution
 - Brad Morgan to share Fix the Funding Formula & Project 211 contact information and website link in district communication to families and staff.
- 6. Support for State-Level Funding Advocacy
 - Committee members to promote the March 23rd Ways & Means hearing in Lawrence and encourage community participation as part of the funding formula/funding advocacy effort.

Documents Reviewed / Referred To

- 2026-02-24-SCAgenda
- 2026-02-24-SCPaket
- 2026-02-09-SCMinutes
- 2026-01-29-SCMinutes
- Warrants
- Donations
- Strategic Plan Progress Report (February 2026)
- FY24-FY26 Van Pool Contract Signed
- Van Pool Contract Extension Proposal 2.24.26
- 2026-27 School District Calendar Revised

Respectfully submitted,
Robin Eibye, Secretary

APPROVED: March 10, 2026
