

NHS School Council

April 7, 2026

MEETING SUMMARY

Member Attendance: Violet Aldrich, Amber Barbere, Jeanne Coffey, Rich Pace, Aaron Ribaud-Smith, Thomas Rich, Lucy Rimer, Erin Seaton, Katie Seaton, Mike Testa, Andy Wulf

I) High School Updates

- **Inspired Learning Day**

Inspired Learning Day feedback was positive. A highlight shared by the students included Mr. Sturma's historical tour of the building that revealed architectural features and hidden spaces like the fourth floor attic and old bleachers hidden behind a library wall. Andy Wulf explained that overall the day provides an opportunity for the faculty and students to engage in activities and learning experience tied to interests and the District's Portrait of a Graduate.

- **Junior Prom**

Andy Wulf shared that the Junior Prom was well attended with over 250 students. There were no issues and the students enjoyed themselves dancing to the DJ work of Mr. Groleau.

- **College Career Interview with Channel 25**

Aaron Ribaud Smith, Amber Barbere, Lucy Rimer, and Tommy Rich discussed their interview with Channel 25 a week earlier. The focus was on the uncertainty students may face beyond college, given the current landscape with AI and the changing job market.

Details

- Aaron Ribaud-Smith: College Guidance Network contacted school to participate in a story about post-high school anxiety and stress. He noted the story will air early May.
- Lucy Rimer: Reporter asked open-ended questions, different from the previous CBS cell phone interview she was a part of.
- Aaron Ribaud-Smith: Part of the interview focused on our school's approach to post-secondary preparation. He noted NHS was selected due

the school's focus on helping students strengthen their ability to adapt.

- **Career Technical Education Steering Committee**

- Andy Wulf explained that the committee is working to expand CTE programming and regional access.
- Members of the team include representatives from Northern Essex Community College, Regional Chamber of Commerce, city officials, and school district officials
- The team will help NHS create a 5-year strategic plan to increase CTE programs at Newburyport High School and expand access regionally.
- Amber Barbere is part of the team and she noted how the group is diverse with different backgrounds. She is excited about this opportunity and conversations and planning that is taking place.
- Andy Wulf stated the meeting next Friday will include a building tour of spaces being considered for CTE programming.
- Lucy Rimer noted the interest of students in the medical room being considered to support a health pathway.

- **Student Learning Dialogue Follow-up**

The Instructional Leadership Team is developing professional development based on dialogue feedback.

- Andy Wulf stated the dialogue occurred 3-4 weeks ago with feedback now being processed by the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). The ILT will narrow the information down to a set of instructional best practices.
- The goal is that there is a shared understanding of high-quality learning experiences from both student and teacher perspectives
- Teachers will engage with the best practices at their May staff meeting.

- **Budget Update**

- The Budget Hearing is scheduled for tomorrow.
- Andy Wulf explained that administrative consolidation is planned at the high school level to reduce budget
- Currently there is no loss of programs, but further cuts could impact programs

- Tom Rich asked what would be considered if the District needs to reduce more. Andy Wulf explained that he would refer to program/course requests to make that decision.
- Andy Wulf explained that right there are multiple budget options being considered by the school committee: 5.2%, 4.75%, 4.5%, 4.3% city allocation

II) Policy Discussion

- **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

The council confirmed their recommendation to update the graduation requirements so they align with the MassCore.

Recommendation Confirmed by Council

- Increase the mathematics requirement to **four units (four full years)**.
- Reduce the **History/Social Studies requirement to three units**.
- Establish **Civics/Government as a separate ½-unit graduation requirement**.

Section 3 - Academics

3.1 – Credits and Graduation Requirements

Newburyport High School credits for graduation are obtained by having attended NHS for at least one semester. All courses at Newburyport High School are semester courses that normally yield a total of 2.5 graduation credits. Credit values for individual courses are contained in the description presented in the current *Program of Studies* and are granted to students upon successful completion of a given course of study. To graduate from NHS, students must accumulate 110 credits, pass all of the required courses of study, achieve competency determination "CD" (see below 3.2), and have attended NHS for at least one semester.

The subject areas and credit quantities required of students are as follows:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| English | 4 years | 20 credits | |
| History | 4 years | 20 credits | 3 years - 15 Credits |
| Mathematics | 3 years | 15 credits | 4 years - 20 Credits |
| Science | 3 years | 15 credits | |
| World Language | 2 years | 10 credits | |
| Physical Education | 4 semesters | 10 credits | |
| Visual and Performing Arts | 2 semesters | <u>5 credits</u> | Add - Civics/Govt - 2.5 Credits |
| | | 95 credits | |

The additional credits required to reach 110 credits for graduation are to be chosen from those courses listed in the *Program of Studies*.

- **Honor Roll Policy Clarification**

- At the March meeting, Tom Rich shared the concern regarding the Honor Roll Policy and that students would not be eligible if they had enrichment block both semesters.
- Mr. Wulf updated the council on what was determined. He explained the policy in the handbook was antiquated to a time when the high school assigned every student a 1

semester study hall during the school year. When the high school's schedule changed in 2021, study halls were eliminated. To encourage students taking an advanced course, an enrichment period was created to support students.

- Mr. Wulf explained that the current language will be updated to reflect students needing to take a minimum of 6 courses a semester to qualify for the honor roll.

● AI Policy Discussion

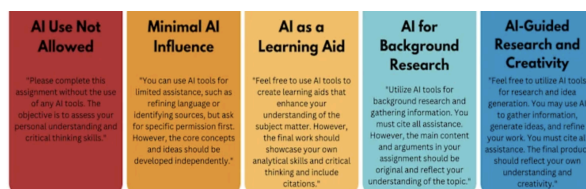
The council engaged in an extensive discussion on AI and the school's Unethical Use of AI Policy. Andy Wulf explained the objective of reviewing the policy was to determine whether or not an additional layer should be added when a student and parent denies the use of AI despite the evidence a teacher presents.

In summary from the discussion, the council asked Mr. Wulf to work with the teachers to develop a common tool that can be used throughout the school that makes it explicit to students when they can or cannot use AI. The council felt this would be an important first step before addressing the Unethical Use of AI Policy.

Some discussion specifics are below:

- Amber Barbere expressed concern that the policy feels punitive rather than educational, suggesting understanding why students use AI. Different reasons require different responses (i.e. skills deficit vs. stress vs. time management). There is also encouragement of AI use for some tasks like timelines.
- Andy Wulf explained the policy is designed for the teacher to engage the student in conversation for it to be educational.
- Students noted there are different approaches to using or not using AI across departments. In some classes, students sign an agreement.
- Aaron Ribaud-Smith shared a "Scale of Use" Guide for AI created by a school in Kentucky.

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Adapted from Bank of AI Use

- Jeanne Coffey recommended that if an assignment explicitly notes that students are not to use AI that the school can refer to its Cheating Policy.

- Erin Seaton noted how colleges are encouraging the use of AI recognizing its importance in the future of work.
- Violet Aldrich stated it is important for students in high school to develop skills without the use of AI. She used the example of understanding the process for solving a math problem as an important skill in our development just like showing our own critical thinking in writing.