

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS

**School Committee Business Meeting
6:30PM**

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

SC Business Meeting Agenda August 26, 2026

SC Business Meeting Agenda Notes August 26, 2026

SC Business Meeting Minutes June 24, 2026

Facilities Summer Project Update

School Committee Summer Retreat Agenda

Superintendent's Report

Newburyport Public Schools
School Committee Business Meeting

Wednesday, August 26, 2026 at 6:30PM
High School Library - 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3539607329?pwd=O8JAvMY81HTUFk5f36kofi6wFRM3vf.1&omn=86811924100>

Meeting ID: 353 960 7329 / Passcode: 327902

The Mission of the Newburyport Public Schools, the port where tradition and innovation converge, is to ensure each student achieves intellectual and personal excellence and is equipped for life experiences through a system distinguished by students, staff, and community who: - practice kindness and perseverance - celebrate each unique individual - value creativity; experiential, rigorous educational opportunities; scholarly pursuits; and life-long learning - provide the nurturing environments for emotional, social, and physical growth - understand and embrace their role as global citizens.

Please note: The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. The meeting will be televised locally live on Comcast Channel 9 & streamed via <https://ncmhub.org/share/channel-9/>. Every effort will be made to ensure that the public can access the proceedings in real-time. In the event of a technological failure that interrupts our ability to provide remote access, the public body will pause the meeting while attempting to restore the connection. If the disruption continues, the meeting will continue in person for those physically present.

School Committee Business Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance
2. Public Comment
3. *Meeting Minutes June 24, 2026 – *possible Vote*
4. Facilities Summer Projects Update
5. Summer Retreat Re-Cap
6. Subcommittee Updates
 - a. Finance Subcommittee – *Andrew Boger*
 - b. Policy Subcommittee – *Kathleen Shaw*
 - c. Teaching & Learning Subcommittee – *Breanna Higgins*
 - d. SEPAC – *Kathleen Shaw*
 - e. NEF – *Lauren Eramo*
7. Superintendent's Report
8. New Business

* Possible Vote

Adjournment

** The School Committee reserves the right to call **executive session**, as provided under Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2), of the General Laws to discuss strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations, collective bargaining and/or potential litigation.

Newburyport Public Schools
School Committee Business Meeting
August 26, 2026 at 6:30PM
High School Library, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

AGENDA NOTES

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School Committee Business Meeting Agenda

3. *Meeting Minutes June 24, 2026 – possible Vote
4. Facilities Summer Projects Update
Superintendent Sean Gallagher will provide an update for work done on various projects throughout the district this summer. (attached)
5. School Committee Summer Retreat Re-cap
Juliet Walker will summarize the Summer Retreat which took place on August 20, 2026. (attached)
6. Subcommittee Updates
 - a. Finance Subcommittee – Andrew Boger
 - b. Policy Subcommittee – Kathleen Shaw
 - c. Teaching & Learning Subcommittee – Breanna Higgins
 - d. SEPAC – Kathleen Shaw
 - e. NEF – Lauren Eramo
7. Superintendent's Report: *District Improvement Plan Executive Summary, Annual District Readiness Meeting Overview, Opening Day Agenda Overview and Budget/Staffing Update*
8. New Business

* possible vote

FYI: Upcoming Dates:

- ✓ Bresnahan New Student Tour: Tuesday, August 25th @ 12:00 – 1:00PM (grades 1-3)
- ✓ Nock New Students: Tuesday, August 25th @ 6:00 – 8:00PM
- ✓ Teacher's First Day: Monday, August 31st
- ✓ Staff Opening Day Assembly: Monday, August 31st @ 1:30PM
- ✓ High School New Student Orientation: Tuesday, September 1st @ 9:00AM – 12:00PM
- ✓ District Meet & Greets: Tuesday, September 1st
 - Bresnahan: 9:00AM – 12:00PM
 - Molin: 1:00PM – 2:00PM
 - Nock: 9:30AM – 1:00PM
- ✓ Gr 1-12 Students 1st Day: Wednesday, September 2nd
- ✓ No School – closed: Friday, September 4th
- ✓ Labor Day – closed: Monday, September 7th
- ✓ Gr Pk - K Students 1st Day: Tuesday, September 8th
- ✓ School Committee Business Meeting – Wednesday, September 9th
- ✓ Open House / Back To School Dates
 - Nock: Tuesday, September 15th @ 6:00PM
 - High: Wednesday, September 16th @ 5:30PM
 - Bresnahan: Thursday, September 17th @ 6:00PM (gr PK - 1) and 7:00PM (gr 2-3)
 - Molin: Thursday, September 24th @ 6:00PM

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING
Senior/Community Center, 331 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Juliet Walker called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:31 PM. Roll call found all members present, except Mayor Sean Reardon.

Public Comments: none

Warrant

On a motion by Andrew Boger and seconded by Lauren Eramo it was

VOTED: to approve the Warrant in the amount of \$562,805.01 as presented.

Warrant 8182 (FY26)	\$459,443.62
A-Warrant	<u>\$103,361.39</u>
	\$562,805.01

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Minutes

Motion:

On a motion by John Ricci and seconded by Kathleen Shaw it was

VOTED: to accept the minutes for the June 10, 2026 School Committee meeting.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Newburyport's Whittier School Committee Reps – Check-in

Stephanie Kalina and Erin Fenn provided an update of end-of-year student activities, such as the prom, various awards, graduation, 2026 SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills conference in Atlanta and summer programming. Whittier students competed in a NH Bike Build-Off Competition in Laconia, NH and carpentry students built / distributed little free libraries. Whittier continues to work with MSBA for a future facility, and a shared campus with Northern Essex is still under consideration. A new financial leader was elected (Angus King). The Whittier School Committee completed the superintendent's evaluation with established goals for the coming year, and approved a partnership with Southern Maine Community College. Erin Fenn is also on the salary subcommittee which recently agreed to a 3.1% for non-union staff.

John Ricci requested a copy of the Whittier Superintendent's evaluation report. Erin Fenn will share that after their meeting in August.

New Literacy Curriculum Adoption Process

Dr. Tom Abrams provided a presentation covering the process of finding and adopting “Fish Tank”, a new literacy curriculum for grades K – 5. Dr. Abrams explained various steps involved with the evaluation of existing curriculum, the selection process for new curriculum, and piloting of selected curricula (CKLA and Fishtank Learning). His presentation also included a sampling of curriculum topics for grades K-5, a summary of the review & analysis of each pilot, and teacher’s feedback as to why they chose Fishtank. Dr. Abrams explained the plan for a successful implementation for 2026-2027, reviewed examples of how teachers can collaboratively contribute on the different units, and areas to be considered to evaluate and measure success of the new curriculum.

2028 NHS Overnight Field Trips Follow-up

Principal Andy Wolf reviewed the new vendor selection process that will be used by the high school teachers when planning international travel opportunities for students. He described the process and reviewed the travel feedback survey and the vendor comparison matrix.

High School teachers Aileen Maconi, Aaron Ribaud-Smith, and Matthew Matloff used the new process to help plan proposed trips to Dominican Republic (Feb. 2028), Japan (April 2028) and The Alps/Mediterranean (Summer 2028). Aileen and Aaron presented their findings for the three trips, which included vendor information comparisons such as trip itinerary, trip costs / discounts, hotel accommodations, tip inclusion, meals, travel insurance availability, private tour options, educational credits, student-to-chaperone ratios, and advisor compensation/benefits. Aileen and Aaron also explained how they choose their trips, as well as scholarships that are available to students. School Committee members had opportunities to ask questions throughout the presentations.

Andrew Boger suggested making sure all outfits are weighted against other options.

John Ricci recommended amending the policy/process to ensure all our trips are private.

Breanna Higgins suggested adding a “student satisfaction” row to the student survey.

Motion:

On a motion by Breanna Higgins and seconded by Lauren Eramo it was

VOTED: to approve all three proposed trips consistent with Policy JJH – Student Overnight or Late Night Travel. (Japan - April 2028 w/World Strides, Dominican Republic - February 2028 w/EF, and Alps & Mediterranean – Summer 2028 w/EF)

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Kathleen Shaw and John Ricci abstained

AI Ad Hoc Guidelines

After thanking all the members that participated with the NPS AI Ad Hoc Committee, Superintendent Sean Gallagher explained the process they used to gather information and ideas to develop a list of guiding principles. His presentation included a review of the four guiding principles, expectations for responsible and/or prohibited use of AI within NPS, as well as teaching & learning opportunities for students and teachers.

The Committee took a short recess at 8:33PM and returned at 8:40PM.

FY27 Budget Update

Superintendent Sean Gallagher explained the current FY27 budget gap of \$123,901. The Superintendent reviewed \$30K school nutrition related costs that can be charged to the School Nutrition Revolving Fund, as well as three additional options that could be used to close the remaining budget gap of \$93,901. Recommended next steps, as well as additional staffing items to monitor were also presented.

2026-2027 School Choice Wait List Review

Based on existing School Choice information discussed during the FY27 Budget Update presentation, additional spots for 2026-2027 were approved in grades 6, 9 and 10.

Motion:

On a motion by Breanna Higgins and seconded by Andrew Boger it was

VOTED: to increase 2026-2027 School Choice in grade 6 by 7 slots for a total of 12, increase grade 9 by 9 slots for a total of 24, and increase grade 10 by 3 slots for a total of 8.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Finance Subcommittee

Andrew Boger said they discussed the FY27 budget in their last meeting.

Policy Subcommittee

Kathleen Shaw stated they met on June 22nd and reviewed the AI Ad Hoc Guidelines. Further discussion regarding any AI policies will be done before school starts. Juliet Walker stated a policy related to student medication needs to be updated and reviewed by the Superintendent.

Teaching & Learning Subcommittee

Lauren Eramo stated they have not met.

SEPAC

Kathleen Shaw had nothing new to report since their last meeting.

NEF

Lauren Eramo stated their next meeting date was June 24th, not June 17th as previously reported.

Summer Retreat Planning

Agenda Topics: Juliet Walker will send an email to obtain ideas / topics for the retreat. One key topic will be the budget.

Date: In addition, Juliet will send an email asking members if they will be able to change the Summer Retreat date by one week, from August 12th to August 19th. The start time is currently 5:00PM.

Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent's report covered the following:

- ❖ Favorite Poem Project: The Superintendent enjoyed performing with his daughter at this year's event at the Senior Center. Mayor Reardon, Lauren Eramo and Kathleen Shaw also participated.
- ❖ NEF Awards: This year's award ceremony was held at The Deck. Superintendent Gallagher congratulated all the winner's and recognized NPS students that performed.
- ❖ Honoring Skipper: Superintendent Gallagher recognized "Skipper", a district therapy dog, who officially retired after 10 years of service at the Nock/Molin schools.
- ❖ Kindergarten Readiness: The Superintendent thanked Bresnahan Principal and kindergarten staff for their work with the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. He also explained the new 1-week Kindergarten bootcamp pilot program that will run this summer and is being sponsored by the Swasey Grant program.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

On a motion by John Ricci and seconded by Kathleen Shaw it was

VOTED: to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 9:26PM.

Motion Passed

Mayor Sean Reardon absent

Breanna Higgins absent

FACILITIES SUMMER PROJECTS UPDATE

Roofing Projects Progress

Newburyport High School: The Library roof is complete, and both the Upper West and Upper East roofs are at 95% completion, with minor finishes underway. The Auditorium roof is 50% complete and scheduled for completion by Wednesday (8/26).

Nock/Molin School: The Auditorium roof is at 95% completion, and the Gym roof is at 30%, scheduled to be wrapped up by Thursday (8/27).

Timeline & Site Impact: All primary roofing will be completed by the end of this week, with minor edging and skylight work continuing over the coming weeks. All heavy equipment will be offsite by Thursday (8/27).

Crews will work Friday, Saturday, and early next week, but no work will take place on Wednesday (9/2) or Thursday (9/3) for the first days of school. Subsequent work will occur strictly during after-hours and weekends, resuming Friday, September 4th.

High School Renovations & Chapter 74 / Pathways Development

Completed Facilities: Building on last year's completion of the Media Video Lab and the June completion of the College & Career Center, James McSweeney and his team, alongside outside contractors, have fully renovated the basement music/band rooms.

Engineering & Maker Space: We have developed a new engineering computer lab adjacent to a dedicated maker space for our CAD programs. Students will design 3D prototypes in the lab and construct physical models in the maker space, directly enhancing our Engineering and Chapter 74 Pathways programs.

A big thank you and recognition to our Newburyport Education Foundation who have spearheaded and funded these high school renovations / projects.

Accessibility Enhancements: Concrete walkways in front of NHS and the nearby retaining wall are in process of repairs to ensure full accessibility for wheelchair-bound students and individuals with disabilities for the start of school next week. We continue to partner with the City on long-term Capital Improvement Plan solutions for a permanent fix.

School District Operations & Readiness

Despite managing these extensive capital projects alongside active summer programming, James McSweeney, our maintenance team, and our custodial staff worked tirelessly to ensure all school buildings are fully prepped, cleaned, and ready for staff and students.

Newburyport Public Schools
School Committee & Central Office
Summer Retreat

Thursday, August 20, 2026

NHS Library

5:00 – 8:00PM

Summer Retreat Agenda:

1. School Committee Organizational Procedures and Norms Check In (5:00 - 5:15)
2. 2025-2026 School Year in Review (5:15 - 5:45)
 - a. Superintendent Update
 - b. SC Discussion and Reflection
3. School Year Goal Setting (5:45 - 6:30)
 - a. Review of 2025/26 Goals
 - b. SC Discussion on 2026/27 SC Roles and Goals

** Dinner Break (6:30 - 6:45) **

4. 2026-2027 Budget Discussion (6:45 - 7:45)
 - Anticipated funding challenges and budget drivers
 - Overall schedule
 - Outreach/engagement
 - Establishing funding priorities
 - Communication with City Council
5. Wrap-Up (7:45 - 8:00)

Adjourn - 8:00PM

Superintendent's Report



District Improvement Plan Executive Summary (2025–2027)

The 2025–2027 District Improvement Plan centers on our "Portrait of a Graduate" vision, ensuring every student leaves Newburyport Public Schools well-rounded, literate, and prepared for post-secondary success. Key progress over the past year highlights curriculum advancements, including a full pilot rollout of the K–5 FishTank literacy curriculum, expansion of Math Recovery interventions, and the initial pilot of the EdGems middle school math program. Additionally, the district successfully reduced chronic absenteeism, expanded high school career pathway programs, and completed major capital improvements alongside securing \$3.4 million in competitive grant funding. Looking forward to the 2026–2027 school year, primary focus areas include embedding these new ELA and math programs, evaluating district-wide Therapeutic Learning Classrooms (TLC), establishing a public climate survey dashboard, and continuing the long-term expansion of Chapter 74 vocational programming.

Annual District Readiness Meeting Overview

On August 24, district leadership convened at the High School Library for the Annual District Readiness Meeting to finalize operational preparations for the upcoming school year. The agenda focused on critical cross-departmental coordination, opening with public safety strategies alongside City Police and Fire leadership, followed by bus transportation protocols with The Coach Company. The leadership team also reviewed facilities updates, safety protocols, district health and allergy management guidelines, and human resources staffing readiness. The meeting concluded with a comprehensive administrative wrap-up and a collaborative team lunch.

Opening Day Agenda Overview

Opening Day for staff is scheduled for Monday, August 31st, at the Nock/Molin auditorium, marking the official launch of the 2026–2027 school year. The program includes opening remarks by the School Committee, greetings from district leadership, and introductions of new staff across all four school buildings. The agenda also features formal introductions of the district's union leadership representing AFSCME, the Instructional Assistants Union, and the NTA, setting a collaborative tone for the year ahead. The week will continue with dedicated staff professional development and photo ID scheduling on Tuesday, September 1st.

Budget and Staffing Update

The district opens the school year nearly 100% fully staffed across all buildings, a testament to the efficient work of our principals, administrative teams, and Director of Human Resources Pam Kealey, whose ongoing work streamlining our recruitment and onboarding processes has put us in strong shape. Financially, our budget is on track and well-positioned to meet all Quarter 1 obligations. Furthermore, strategic personnel reallocations throughout the summer allowed us to flexibly address critical needs including adding an eighth Kindergarten section, securing targeted administrative coverage, and fulfilling required Instructional Assistant IEP support all within our existing operating budget.

NEWBURYPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

District Improvement Plan 2025-2027

Executive Summary 2025-2026

August 20, 2026

Newburyport Public Schools...the port where tradition and innovation converge

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE VISION

Our vision is for every child to leave Newburyport Public Schools literate across the disciplines; physically, emotionally & socially well; innovative problem solvers; civically engaged; and prepared for life after graduation.

From the day they enter school as 5 year-olds to the day they graduate, our students are growing and changing.

Across this K-12 pathway, we want to make sure young people can celebrate success, persevere through failure, and create a healthy and hopeful path to their future.

For this reason, we invest in school climate and culture while also analyzing and reflecting on student academic data. We remain focused on our goals while staying flexible so we can respond to changing needs and invest in safe and secure facilities.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS				
Teaching & Learning	Supports	Culture	Operations	Stakeholder
Providing high quality, innovative instruction	Ensuring every child has the supports they need to grow	Creating a culture of belonging	Ensuring highly qualified staff, up to date resources, and safe buildings	Creating a community of active stakeholders

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

Newburyport Public Schools will create an environment where students exceed standards and demonstrate measurable growth across state tested subject areas. Our Portrait of a Graduate goal is to build literacy across all the disciplines. Although the district continues to take many action steps that ensure high quality teaching and learning in every content area, *the priority focus area for our 2025-27 Improvement Plan is on the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of K-12 mathematics and K-8 literacy.*

Goal I: All students will have access to high quality math instruction through implementation of recommendations from [District Math Priorities](#). The District focus area will be on effective implementation of K-5 iReady math program and 6-8 math curriculum and instruction. We will meet achievement targets set by the DESE for the 2026 & 2027 math MCAS for the groups: “all students,” “students with disabilities” and “EL/former EL students” (see [DESE 2024 Math Accountability Data](#)).

GOAL II: All students will have access to high quality literacy instruction. For the FY26-27 years, we will prioritize K-5 ELA and K-8 writing. We will meet achievement targets set by the DESE for the 2026 & 2027 ELA MCAS in grades 3-8 for the groups: “all students,” “students with disabilities” and “EL/former EL students” (see [DESE 2024 ELA Accountability Data](#)).

Goal III: The District will use grant funding to increase student engagement by expanding opportunities for educator professional development around developing engaging curricula.

Student Learning Goals (2025-2026)

Completed & Significant Progress

In K–12 mathematics, we completed the review of middle school math resources and will begin a pilot of the EdGems program this fall. At the K–5 levels, we implemented regular grade-level meetings, ensured implementation of fixed K–5 pacing guides, and continued coaching and professional development in math concepts. We continued the implementation of K–5 Math Recovery intervention with the training of all coaches and the use of program materials in grades K–3. Finally, we continued the Grade 8 Algebra I analysis and drafted a K–12 math vertical alignment curriculum document.

In literacy and specialized instruction, we successfully reviewed, piloted, and selected a new K–5 literacy curriculum resource (Fish Tank), initiating district-wide implementation following summer professional development. K–12 writing rubrics were evaluated, and summer professional development on The Writing Revolution and Fish Tank further strengthened writing instruction. Two additional teachers earned certification in the Orton-Gillingham reading program, and we conducted a review and vertical alignment of the curriculum in the PreK–12 Independent Development Center (IDC) programs. To support the rollout and pilot a new approach to intervention, we piloted a two-week Summer Lit Camp. Additionally, middle and high school educators participated in performance-assessment workshops to enhance common assessment rigor.

To support compliance and inclusive practices, all 504 coordinators completed a yearlong training on new regulations and best practices, culminating in an updated District 504 manual in December 2025.

Our PK–3 Playful Learning initiatives made significant progress, with two educators at each grade level developing and implementing playful learning lessons, work that will continue into the 2027–28 school year. In addition, we developed and funded a new special class, The Living Classroom, that brings playful learning and science standards together in an outdoor education special for all K–3 students.

Under the leadership of Principal Wulf, the high school expanded enrollment in pathway programs and initiated the multi-year application process for career technical programs. Supported by a community-wide steering committee, NEF-funded space upgrades, and DESE grants, the high school made significant progress toward developing and implementing a clear vision for CTE programs.

At each grade level, principals supported the facilitation of three annual data-review protocols. Academic data included MCAS, iReady, DIBELS, and common assessments. School culture data included VOCAL, MCIEA School Quality data, attendance, social-emotional metrics. *Teaching & Learning Summary* https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vOvIVhutdegoYx89MXe1_ux0G9b9FmBN/view?usp=drive_link

Continued Focus (2026–2027)

Moving into the upcoming school year, we will focus on implementing the K–5 FishTank ELA program, continuing the vertical alignment of K–12 writing assessments, expanding math professional development and coaching, piloting a middle school math program, and expanding both Math Recovery interventions and performance-based assessment work. To enhance specialized student support, the district engaged an outside consultant to evaluate the districtwide Therapeutic Learning Classrooms (TLC) model, alongside ongoing staff professional development to strengthen TLC programming throughout the 2026–2027 school year. Finally, we remain committed to supporting the growth and expansion of 6–12 Pathways and Chapter 74 programming.

Teaching & Learning Summary 2025-2026 Link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vOvIVhutdegoYx89MXe1_ux0G9b9FmBN/view?usp=drive_link

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP GOAL

To realize the vision outlined in our *Portrait of a Graduate*, district and school leaders will strengthen instructional leadership by supporting educators in designing and delivering high-impact, student-centered learning experiences. These experiences will foster growth across academic disciplines and promote students' well-being, creativity, collaboration, and civic engagement. By the end of the 2027 school year, we will demonstrate progress through increased educator use of evidence-based planning, collaborative professional dialogue, and student-focused lesson design.

Completed & Significant Progress (2025-2026)

District and school leaders strengthened instructional decision-making by facilitating regular data meetings across all schools, implementing structured grade-level and content-area team meetings, and executing teacher-led monthly discipline meetings (supported by district coaches). District literacy and math coaches facilitated professional development programs (e.g., faculty meetings, professional learning courses) and supported educators in classrooms.

The summer focused on building on this work with courses in areas such as writing, math fluency, and playful learning. In addition, four separate offerings provided teachers with paid time to strengthen their literacy, math and assessment plans. Over 160 summer professional development projects are under way with over 130 educators participating. *Summer Professional Development Link:*

<https://sites.google.com/newburyport.k12.ma.us/npssummer2026?usp=sharing#h.7fp4bsr2gm0o>

In addition, this summer we supported the development and implementation of a Kindergarten Boot Camp program. Three pilot sessions were run and will be evaluated as we return to school in the fall. The POG team and student ambassadors successfully deepened District-wide understanding of the Portrait of a Graduate vision through dedicated faculty meetings and the January professional development program honoring the stories of our “home grown” educators.

Finally, all NPS educators participated in a half-day program on artificial intelligence run by the Day of AI. This program was followed up with an advisory group to begin to draft guidance for the district in the area of artificial intelligence.

Continued Focus (2026–2027)

Leadership will continue facilitating annual vertical content-based discussions led by teacher leaders, refining data-driven planning protocols, and maintaining collaborative PD structures to support high-impact instructional delivery.

PROFESSIONAL CULTURE GOAL

Our goal is to create a school learning environment where every student, parent/guardian and staff member can proudly say, “I belong here.” Students who feel connected to school have both high attendance and high participation rates. In addition to measuring our impact on attendance, we will also continue to create opportunities for students to engage with school outside of the classroom through extracurricular activities, internship opportunities, and community partnerships.

Our District Improvement plan also prioritizes building a supportive and enriching community for our staff. We are committed to creating collaborative partnerships with our district unions (Newburyport Teachers Association, Instructional Assistants Union, and AFSCME).

Completed & Significant Progress (2025-2026)

Through sustained funding for the District Attendance Supervisor and building-level Attendance Response Teams, NPS achieved a marked reduction in chronic absenteeism across all grade levels. Partnering with the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA, formerly ECP), we completed year two of climate and culture surveys for staff, administration, and students.

Continued Focus (2026–2027)

In the 2026–2027 school year, we will launch the parent/guardian survey to establish a full three-year baseline to populate our public data dashboard. We will also continue funding building-specific climate work and expanding extracurricular, internship, and community engagement options for students.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOAL

The District will pursue a number of strategies to ensure families feel connected to the NPS vision and school operations.

Completed & Significant Progress (2025–2026)

NPS enhanced accessibility and transparency by modernizing school websites, optimizing family communication channels, and meeting state and federal security standards. Active community partnerships were sustained with the Newburyport Education Foundation (NEF), PTOs, the Human Rights Commission, and Recreation & Youth Services. Community engagement was further strengthened through the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC), which convened five meetings to host an administrator meet-and-greet forum as well as parent and guardian trainings on sensory integration, mental health, mediation, and parent rights. Additionally, the Superintendent’s Advisory Council provided monthly feedback on budget and strategy, while the newly established ad hoc Artificial Intelligence Subcommittee successfully developed District AI guidelines.

Continued Focus (2026–2027)

Key priorities include evaluating new communication and social media tools to streamline family outreach, continuing the AI Subcommittee's work, and maintaining strong collaborative ties with local community partners.

MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS GOAL

The District will ensure every student and staff member is able to learn in a safe and secure environment.

Completed & Significant Progress (2025–2026)

Fiscal operations remained robust through the Director of Finance and Operations' entry plan execution, FY26 budget management, and development of the FY27 budget. To maximize operational efficiency, the district instituted monthly meetings with regional special education directors to identify cost-sharing opportunities for specialized programming, staffing, and transportation. Major capital and facility projects were completed or scheduled for completion by September, including MSBA Nock-Molin and High School roofing projects, district technology infrastructure upgrades, and NEF-supported improvements to the NHS Media Lab, College & Career Center, and music and engineering spaces. The district also pursued approximately \$3.4 million in competitive grant funding to advance District Improvement Plan priorities, including CTE and career pathways, outdoor and experiential learning, world languages, and college and career readiness. Additionally, the Human Resources Department maintained full staffing, led recruitment and onboarding procedures, managed state licensure compliance, oversaw personnel matters, fostered collaborative labor partnerships, and successfully launched and managed the district's staff daycare program.

Continued Focus (2026–2027)

Operations will focus on FY28 budget development, capital improvements, and the expansion of early childhood care alongside related Chapter 74 programming. The district will continue to pursue grant opportunities to advance strategic priorities and expand programming while minimizing the impact on the operating budget. Long-term planning will center on establishing additional Chapter 74 programs in Multimedia Broadcasting, Advanced Manufacturing, Health Assisting, and Programming & Web Development. To further optimize operational efficiencies, leadership will collaborate with North Shore superintendents and directors to facilitate the creation of a centralized regional transportation model.

Newburyport Public Schools

Annual Readiness Meeting

Monday, August 24, 2026

High School Library

9:30AM – 11:30PM

9:30 – 10:00	School Operations (Police & Fire) Marshall Matt Simons and Deputy Chief Mike Comora
10:00 – 10:30	Bus Transportation (The Coach Company) Jared Notargiacomo
10:30 – 10:45	Security – Safety – Renovations – Facilities James McSweeney
10:45 – 11:00	Medical – Health – Allergy Management Michelle Rybicki
11:00 – 11:15	Staffing – HR Pam Kealey
11:15 – 11:30	Wrap up – Sean Gallagher

Lunch 11:30 (NHS Library)



**Welcome Back to School
Newburyport Public Schools 2026-2027
Opening Day Agenda
Molin/Nock Auditorium**

Monday, August 31, 2026

Opening Day Program

1:30 - 2:30 Welcome & Introductions

Greetings by School Committee Chair Mayor Reardon

- Introduction of Superintendent Sean Gallagher
- School Committee Members:
Juliet Walker, Breanna Higgins, Kathleen Shaw, Andy Boger, Lauren Eramo
and John Ricci
- Newburyport Education Foundation: Carrie O'Donnell

Introduction of Leadership Team - Superintendent Sean Gallagher

- Lisa Furlong, Assistant Superintendent
- Brad Brooks, Director of Pupil Services
- Jeanna Guardino, SPED Program Supervisor
- Pam Kealey, Human Resources Director
- Ethan Manning, Business Manager
- Michelle Rybicki, Director of Nursing
- Tom Abrams, Literacy Coordinator
- Amanda Drugan, Dean of Specialized Programming
- James McSweeney, Director of Grounds & Facilities

Recognition of new staff - by Principals

- Bresnahan Principal: Jamie Sokolowski
- Molin School Principal: Tara Rossi
- Nock MS Principal: Nick Markos
- NHS Principal: Andrew Wulf

Introduction of Union Presidents - Superintendent Sean Gallagher

- AFSCME Representatives: Bobby Falzone & Jessica LeBlanc
- Instructional Assistants Union President: Sharon Bresnahan
- NTA President: Sarah Scannell

**** T-shirt distribution in foyer ****

**Tuesday, September 1st
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Staff Development Day**

Staff Photos IDs: Tuesday, 11:00AM-1:00PM - Nock/Molin Gym (Central Office entrance); All NEW staff, as well as returning staff who have changed jobs and/or building locations, must have photo IDs taken.

NOTE: Returning staff that need a new ID should have their photo taken on student picture day in your school.