

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING/SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, May 7, 2012**

**Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 7:04 PM**

**Room 118
Cheryl Sweeney Presided**

Present: Bruce Menin, Steve Cole, Cheryl Sweeney, Mayor Donna Holaday, Nick deKanter, Audrey McCarthy, Dan Koen

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice-Chairman Cheryl Sweeney called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM. Ms. Sweeney called for a roll call, which found all members present. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

READING OF MISSION STATEMENT:

Ms. Sweeney read the Newburyport School Committee Mission Statement.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motions

Warrants:

On a motion by Dan Koen and seconded by Mayor Holaday it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant:
\$65,350.50

Motion Passed Unanimously

On a motion by Dan Koen and seconded by Mayor Holaday it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant:
\$213,583.51

Motion Passed Unanimously

Minutes

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the Public Hearing for the FY13 Budget minutes of Tuesday, April 24, 2012.

Motion Passed Unanimously

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Dan Koen it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the Regular School Committee Meeting minutes of Tuesday, April 24, 2012.

Motion Passed Unanimously

NHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:

NHS Student Representative Alex Bradley reported on the following:

- Advanced Placement Testing started today.
- May 18 is the last day of school for seniors – senior exam week follows then senior week.

- He introduced his sister Julia Bradley who has been elected as the new student representative for the next school year.

All members of the Committee thanked Alex for his participation and he was given an overwhelming ovation.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment at this time.

2012-2013 SCHOOL CALENDAR REVIEW:

Background Information:

On January 26, the Superintendent recommended to the School Committee to approve a calendar that moved release days from Thursdays to Friday (Draft #4). At that time, the Superintendent only brought draft #4 forward as a result of working with a Calendar Ad Hoc Committee.

Since that time two issues emerged.

Friday Release Days

School Committee members have developed more concerns about the Friday release days. They feel it will cause unusual student absenteeism. Families have shared that they may schedule three day weekends with their families. The release of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey results show an increase in substance abuse among high school students. Also, school expulsion rates are much higher than last year. The high school principal is concerned that students will begin their weekend earlier and may not come to school at all. Newburyport business and shop owners are more concerned about students milling around shops on a Friday release day.

Civil Rights Audit

A Coordinated Program Review for Civil Rights released on April 17, had a finding: "A review of documentation indicates that Newburyport High School does not meet the requirement of 990 hours. There is a one year compliance date of April 17, 2013.

The School Committee asked the Superintendent on April 24, to review the calendar again, as it relates to release days to address both issues. The Superintendent looked at delayed openings and reconfiguring release days. The Superintendent asked Assistant Superintendent Deirdre Farrell to review four start/end time scenarios and costs related to each scenario:

Youth Services

The Superintendent met with Andi Egmont. She will offer services on Thursday or Friday. She stated that attendance at services such as YWCA usually goes down on release days.

Parent Survey

Parents were surveyed in January, 2012, about their choice of release days. 86% chose Fridays.

Appeal to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

On Thursday, May 3, the Superintendent spoke to Dean Paolilo, Metro North Supervisor for Program Quality Assurance, about the finding. The Superintendent explained that in order to address the finding by April 17, 2013, the district had to make a decision within a very short window (2-3 weeks) because the calendar had been set. It made more sense to change the April 17, 2013 date to September, 2013, to allow the high school to work on a calendar that was less reactionary and more thoughtful. Dean verbally agreed but wanted to check with his supervisor. Dean did mention that DESE would work with the district.

Status as of May 7

1. The High School will capture 9 hours towards 990 hours and will be 9 hours short for over 50 percent of the students.
2. There is an expectation that the district will have the next school year to plan for the 990 hours to address the Civil Rights finding.
3. The Superintendent supports the current release day format rather than delayed openings.

Dr. Kerble asked Assistant Superintendent Deirdre Farrell to explain the transportation costs that will be charged for extra time – they are:

- 2 hrs / 3 hrs 30 hrs per year \$700 - \$800
- 2 hrs / 2 ½ hrs 15 hrs per year \$400 - \$600
- High school delay 56 hrs per year \$1,500 - \$1,600
- No cost scenario

A delayed opening didn't make sense – early release made sense.

Discussion:

Bruce Menin suggested holding brown bag seminars having lunch with teachers – this will capture additional time.

Cheryl Sweeney inquired regarding the 2 hour professional development – other levels have 3? Principal Parent said yes.

Dr. Kerble commented on when students get dismissed.

Cheryl Sweeney inquired how much time toward 990 do we capture. Principal Parent explained at length, but said to do this by September is impossible.

Dr. Kerble asked if internship hours count. Principal Parent said yes.

Ms. McCarthy inquired regarding internship hours in the morning. Principal Parent said yes.

Nick deKanter asked to the audit – how short are we? Principal Parent explained.

Dan Koen inquired possibly dropping early release days. Principal Parent said we are very close – given another year we will meet this. He stated they have addressed this with fidelity and integrity.

Bruce Menin said this is not the year to be giving up early release days given all the issues we are facing.

Dan Koen said he is not in favor of getting rid of early release days – teachers need staff development days per their contract.

Bruce Menin said if we assume everything is static it's hard to squeeze anything else. We must think outside the box – what kind of infrastructure would be in place to capture community service. Principal Parent commented on this.

Mayor Holaday wanted to understand what Principal's recommendation is:

- Nothing
- Add prep time at exam time
- 2 hour early release

Mayor Holaday asked if they needed more data at this point.

Dan Koen said early release affects more than just the High School.

Nick deKanter asked, in terms of understanding, where are we right now – will we get the addition time asked for. Dr. Kerble said yes.

Audrey McCarthy asked if they were grouping this altogether tonight?

Motion:

On a motion by Nick deKanter and seconded by Dan Koen it was

VOTED: To table the discussion of any variances regarding 990 hours until they have more data.

Discussion

Cheryl Sweeney said the School Committee was the body to bring more information regarding 990 hours.

Karen Brann said the next step is the Department sends someone to work with us on the question – we are waiting for that date.

Dr. Kerble said the Principal of the High School would like a delayed opening.

Assistant Superintendent Deirdre Farrell said the monkey wrench is part of the 990 hours include dismissing at 12:17 not 12:00 – additional 20 minutes would be at a cost – but minimal.

Dr. Kerble stated the calendar has release days on Friday – Friday to Thursday?

Cheryl Sweeney commented on no delayed opening.

Nick deKanter asked what the Superintendent thought – Dr. Kerble said no delayed opening.
Steve Cole asked if the 12:17 time on lunch has been discussed with teachers. Principal Parent said they have not discussed a time frame.
Deirdre Farrell said there may be state regulations for lunch schedules.
Principal Parent discussed lunch times.
Bruce Menin asked if they were voting to set aside any discussion of 990 hrs.

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday said it was the 990/civil rights report to bring this up – why then are we going to vote.
Audrey McCarthy said she voted yes on this – since then she has received many calls. She is convinced that there are many people who did not look at the whole picture – she wondered why this was changed to Friday in the first place.
Bruce Menin said the Friday vote did not set well with him – did we ask the Principals. Dr. Kerble said principals support early release days on Thursdays. He said if you have expectations, people will live up to them – he thinks students will come to school on Friday – people work hard.
Dan Koen said we did a survey – we had an overwhelming response for Fridays. He will vote to keep it on Fridays.
Cheryl Sweeney asked why do principals support this.
Dr. Kerble said Thursdays have been working, but you have to vote for what makes sense to you.
Assistant Superintendent Angela Bik said Principal Hopping has similar concerns as Principal Parent for Fridays. Thursdays have been working – why would we make the change.
Deirdre Farrell said the Nock School is concerned regarding AYP attendance issues – absentees would rise.

Motion

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: To approve Thursday early release days.

Discussion:

Bruce Menin said we wish we had feedback from Principals.
Steve Cole said some professional people do not having training on Monday or Friday – we must do what is best for overall student achievement.

Motion Passed

6 voted Yes – Dan Koen voted No

At this time 8:32 PM a short break was taken

Mayor Holaday left at 8:37 PM

MSBA UPDATE:

Assistant Superintendent Farrell reported on the following:

- Tuesday, May 15 – Public Forum – City Hall
- May 23 – MSBA Nock/Molin feasibility subcommittee meeting
- There was a School Building Committee meeting last Wednesday evening. Steve Bergholm presented a Nock/Molin Renovation project video and a Bresnahan Building video – these will be on our website – www.newbres.org – www.nockmolin.org

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Joint Ed – Audrey McCarthy reported the May 7th meeting was cancelled – next meeting will be next June.

Policy – Bruce Menin said they met on April 13th – they are doing a full review on all policies and the mission statement.

Finance – Steve Cole said they met on April 27 – they discussed the third quarter financial report and revenue. They will meet on Friday, May 18, at 8:30 PM.

Communications – Nick deKanter said they met on April 24 – they are working diligently to revamp the district website – they are working with the mayor and school building committee. They are conducting tours of the Bresnahan and the Nock/Molin schools. Port Pride has a website with a calendar of tours. There will be informational tables at events.

NEF – Dr. Kerble reported there was a speaker at a recent meeting who spoke about a new way of fundraising.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Dr. Kerble reported on the following:

- He congratulated Spencer Wolf and his students for their second place win at the 35th Annual Deutsches Theaterfest at Mt. Holyoke College. The students in Advanced German wrote and produced their own play. Other students in the German program, Alex Bradley, Matt Caswell, Lindsay Ford, Alan Estes, Nicki Galer, Ryan Campbell, Alexis Cole, Julie Manning, Lea Mantz, Rebecca Kuzman, Rebecca Moreau, Mary True, Jessie Uhlig, Max Vye also acted in the play.
- He congratulated Allan Estes who was a runner up and was awarded \$500, on April 22, in the Storieslive Slam. Teachers Tom Abrams and Steve Malenfant were thanked not only for their commitment and enthusiasm to Storieslive in the Grade 11 curriculum but by making this project a Junior Class event! Debbie Szabo was thanked for her positive attitude who works with all the students.
- The elementary moving up day
- The Molin/Science Fair
- The Brown School visited the Audubon Society
- Ellen Menesale who purchased E-Readers with NEF grant money – the students love the E-Readers.
- Deirdre Farrell for all her MSBA work.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Angela Bik reported on the early release day on May 3. There was a two hour presentation by Dr. Grenier regarding basic orientation of the New Evaluation system. Teacher feedback was positive.

Dr. Kerble said we are off to a great start – we are all trying to work together – this is a long term project. Bruce Menin said this is a significant initiative we are doing here. Originally he said he opposed this – he stated he was wrong – the system does seem to be very consistent. We must have time to do this right, looking for progress not perfection, and we are trying to integrate this with the system we have.

Dr. Kerble said this week is Teacher Appreciation week – on Thursday, Claude Elias of Oregon’s is hosting a gathering for the teachers with free food.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion

On a motion by Nick deKanter and seconded by Steve Cole it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:11 PM.

Motion Passed Unanimously