

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, February 25, 2014**

**Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 7:06 PM**

**Room 118
Mayor Donna Holaday/Cheryl Sweeney Presided**

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

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Mayor Donna Holaday called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM. Mayor Holaday called for a roll call, which found all members present. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

At this point Vice-Chairman Cheryl Sweeney assumed chairmanship of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 25, 2014 AGENDA:

Motion:

On a motion by Nick deKanter and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve the February 25, 2014 agenda.

Motion Passed Unanimously

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motions:

Warrants:

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

VOTED: To approve receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant:
\$16,609.64

Motion Passed Unanimously

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Nick deKanter it was

VOTED: To approve receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$329,771.09

6 – Yes

1 – Present – Mayor Holaday

Motion Passed

Minutes:

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Nick deKanter it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the School Committee Meeting minutes of Monday, February 3, 2014 as amended.

Motion Passed Unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rose Nesserian, 466 Merrimac St.

CONCERN:

She commented on the Middle School Musical “Guys & Dolls”. The rehearsals are going well.

NHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

NHS Student Representative Julia Bradley reported on the following:

- ^ Girls Basketball Team is playing Marblehead tonight in the gym.
- ^ NHS Science Fair is tomorrow
- ^ NHS Drama Festival will be held on March 1st
- ^ MCAS starts next week
- ^ Early dismissal on March 6th
- ^ The eleven students who went on the Guatemala trip in December are having a fundraiser here in Gallery 118 next Thursday, for Safe Passage, which is a non-profit group helping children in Guatemala. Student photography, art, and hand made jewelry will be sold.

BUDGET UPDATE:

Superintendent Susan Viccaro and Executive Assistant Nancy Lysik updated the committee on budget issues. Ms. Lysik presented the latest figures that showed a potential deficit for this school year of \$540,800. She reiterated that these numbers are subject to change and that definitive final amounts won't be determined until May. Changes in the Special Education spending of approx. \$28,000 and a decrease of \$10,000 in projected food service deficit due to a transfer of funds towards to lunch program were shown. The current shortfall of \$87,000 in tuition revenue could change based on actual payments and changes in enrollment. Nearly \$300,000 in anticipated revenue, including FY13 carry-over funds and estimated FY14 transportation and circuit breaker income is expected to mitigate the shortfall. Chapter 70 education aid totaling \$161,000 was used to cover special education tuition expenses. Superintendent Viccaro said that she and Ms. Lysik are personally approving any spending issues. "If it's not something that is absolutely necessary, it's not getting approved.

Discussion:

Cheryl Sweeney inquired regarding the budget freeze – are any of our programs suffering because of the freeze. Answer – We are doing what we would have done.

Cheryl Sweeney asked if we were adhering to state mandates. Answer – Yes, but we are not able to reach all of the goals set in the original budget.

Cheryl Sweeney inquired regarding any new outside placements. Answer - None

SPED UPDATE:

Dr. Barbara Dee updated the Committee on SPED. She stated things are going well, they are moving forward. Current special education district enrollment stands at 341 students – 14 percent of the total student population. Out-of-district enrollment is 30 students. In order to continue to gain back the trust and confidence of parents and the community, keep SPED students in district and also bring out-of-district students back to Newburyport, program development will be crucial moving forward.

Programs cited were Landmark, The Learning Skills Academy and the North Shore Consortium.

According to Dr. Dee's figures, these programs would come at a combined cost of \$588,217 and would involve approx., 12 special educators. This program enhancement would also increase the changes that the district would prevail in due process hearings.

New projects currently being implemented include Language-Based Learning Disabilities Centers and Individual Development Centers at the Bresnahan and Nock-Molin schools, as well as ongoing upgrades in training, procedures, communication with parents and professional development.

Discussion:

Audrey McCarthy questioned Language-Based Learning at the High School.

Bruce Menin questioned executive functioning issues – how are we servicing these students.

Audrey McCarthy questioned Landmark – did we purchase so many hours? Answer – yes, 10 hrs. per school.

Cheryl Sweeney brought up new projects 2013-14 – Language-Based Center – she stated she is trying

to get a picture as to what it means. Dr. Dee explained.

Cheryl Sweeney asked for a comment re: Emily Russin. She also asked what were our post grad opportunities thus far. Dr. Dee explained. She stated there will be a meeting tomorrow regarding this. **Mayor Holaday** stated regarding Opportunity Works. They are building a new facility on the NECCO campus – there will be opportunities there.

Bruce Menin asked regarding the meeting tomorrow – who convened that. Answer – Emma Graf – this is the first of many meetings to come.

Michael Luekens asked if we were actively meeting with families of out-of-district students to see if we can get some of them back. Dr. Dee said she believed we can provide the needed resources to bring some of them back.

Michael Luekens asked if any students were reaching the age of 22. Yes some were.

Steve Cole asked:

- ⤴ Continuation of SPED services – any idea how much more that is going to cost. Answer – no, not yet.
- ⤴ In terms of accountability – are we meeting expectations. Yes.

NHS SCHOOL COUNCIL:

NHS Principal Mike Parent discussed the NHS School Council. He commented on the following areas:

- ⤴ Made a lot of progress in certain areas.
- ⤴ Concentrated 2014-16 School Improvement Plan budgetary items
- ⤴ Incoming classes – looking at current class sizes – it is going to be a fine balancing act next year.

Dr. Ralph Orlando, a member of the NHS School Council stated that when we look at the numbers for core classes there are additional FTE's that will be required in next years High School budget for core classes.

Principal Parent said a lot of new students arrived over the summer months.

Superintendent Viccaro said she is out of her comfort zone re: the number of students in labs.

Principal Parent commented that he accepted a second international student from China today.

Discussion:

Bruce Menin commented on the role of the Council when the evaluation comes out.

Michael Luekens asked what the assessment was re: other school councils. Superintendent Viccaro said the High School was leading the way – others are approaching, but not at our sophistication level as yet.

Nick deKanter asked:

- ⤴ can we get progression over the last five years – tech/stud ratio. Principal Parent spoke about what we lost and what we have brought back.
- ⤴ Student Support Group/student issues

Dr. Orlando said it is time to start spending some money on NHS.

COMMUNITY SERVICE:

Principal Mike Parent explained the Community Service Component – 10 hours per student.

Discussion:

Bruce Menin asked if this is part of a students transcript. Yes

Bruce Menin said there are lots of different ways to offer community service – will it be on the transcript? Yes

Cheryl Sweeney asked if it was 10 hours per student per grade. Yes

Cheryl Sweeney asked if this is in conflict to the State re: 990.

Cheryl Sweeney asked

- ⤴ if this will become a graduation requirement. Hopefully

- ⤴ 75 hrs – 2 ½ credits community service

Steve Cole stated the importance of debriefing, creating a board of directors. He said we are moving in the right direction.

Michael Luekens recognized Principal Parent's efforts in this.

STEM (SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERING MATH)

Assistant Superintendent Angela Bik said that teachers from Newburyport that are participating include: Julie Carroll (K), Julie Doyle (1), Kellie Foster Whyte and John Gangemi (2), Joan Sheehan (3), Elizabeth Doyle (4), and Lauren Eramo (5). During breakout sessions and over lunch we have been able to have some terrific conversations as a cohort around STEM instruction and are making plans as a group to delve into the new Next Generation Science Standards that have recently been released. In addition, we have been able to go on field trips to local STEM businesses where we have learned about how important early exposure to inquiry based learning is to future engagement and learning in STEM. Liz Kinzly, Newburyport STEM Coordinator PK-8. Five workshops will be held – October 22, November 19, December 10, January 7 and February 4. On June 4, an Elementary STEM Summit will be held at Gordon College.

Discussion:

Cheryl Sweeney commented on the STEM Certificate Program and inquired re: matching tuition costs. Answer – 50% reimbursement

Nick deKanter asked what will this mean in the classroom and to students.

Cheryl Sweeney asked what the next step is.

Ms. Bik said the Summit in June. When they come back teachers will work with their grade level.

DDMs (DISTRICT DETERMINED MEASURES):

Assistant Superintendent Bik said we are a little bit behind getting the second DDM approval.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Viccaro reported:

- ⤴ Newburyport High School is one of 48 schools reaching High Achievement status and have been commended by the Department of Education
- ⤴ Parent Speaker Series- Chris Herron's presentation was outstanding
- ⤴ Mentors in Violence Program – working with three other schools
- ⤴ Exploring transition programming
- ⤴ Landmark training
- ⤴ Andi Egmont is awarding us a \$7,500 grant for an outside consultant to work on core values for our district
- ⤴ School Choice – on future agenda
- ⤴ Guidance Department –sat in on a meeting today. They were having individual discussions re: student needs. The Supt. fully supports the dept.
- ⤴ Ski Program – 300 students enrolled – a very successful program
- ⤴ TELLSMass Survey – extended to March 3

Mayor Holaday asked if there was a way to compare last years survey to this years survey?

- ⤴ Superintendents Advisory Council – over 50 people coming to the meeting Thursday evening – truly remarkable
- ⤴ Distributed a School Board article to the Committee's
- ⤴ Public School Closing – draft document – meeting on Friday – will ask question re: process

Mayor Holaday received a letter stating that two NHS students, Evelyne Lourie, Tayla Osbourne are finalists in the 2014 MA Safe Jobs for Youth poster contest, and will be honored on March 12 at the State House.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Joint Ed –February 3 – all about the budget

Teacher Negotiations – stipend subject still open

Superintendent Goals – Ms. Sweeney and Mr. Menin will meet next week – set up workshop – re: evaluation of the Superintendent

Policy – Bruce Menin stated they met – a lot of work to do – take a look at management model – minutes should be approved by sub-committee then presented to the School Committee to be filed.

Finance – haven't met

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

On a motion by Audrey McCarthy and seconded by Michael Luekens it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:25 PM.

Motion Passed Unanimously