

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
BUSINESS MEETING  
Monday, March 16, 2015**

**Newburyport High School  
Meeting Convened at 6:32 PM**

**Room 118  
Cheryl Sweeney Presided**

**Present:** Nick deKanter (absent for roll call, arrived at 6:42), Steve Cole,  
Cheryl Sweeney, Mayor Donna Holaday, Michael Luekens, Bruce Menin  
**Absent:** Audrey McCarthy

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Vice-Chairman Cheryl Sweeney called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM. A roll call was taken. Nick deKanter arrived at 6:42, Audrey McCarthy was absent. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Jay Iannini, Summit Place & Tara Sullivan 41 Summit Place, CONCERN:** They spoke concerning school start times and read a letter supporting later start times for students. They asked the School Committee to organize a task force to study this issue.

**Ralph Orlando, 4 Wm. Hall Drive CONCERN:** School Committee has a communication problem. They also have Whittier problems.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Motions:**

**Warrants:**

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.  
**\$12,411.27**

**Motion Passed**

**Audrey McCarthy absent for vote**

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.  
**\$357,661.76**

**Motion Passed**

**Audrey McCarthy absent for vote**

**Minutes:**

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

**VOTED:** To approve, receive and file the School Committee Business Meeting minutes of Monday, March 2, 2015 as amended.

**Motion Passed**

**Audrey McCarthy absent for vote**

**NHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:**

Julia Bradley, NHS Student Representative reported on the following:

- This week is Spirit Week:  
Today was New England Sports Day  
Tomorrow is wear green for St. Patrick's Day  
Wednesday is Hat Day  
Thursday is wear crimson and gold for the pep rally
- The Penny Wars fundraiser is going on throughout the week, seniors are in the lead after today
- Senior college decisions, scholarships are in process

**NHS THEATRE IN EDUCATION OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP:**

NHS Principal Mike Parent explained the request by teachers Stephanie Williams and Lisa Zaleski for an overnight field trip for 24 Elements of Acting & Design and Theatre-in-Education students to New York from March 27-29. An Itinerary of the events of the trip were provided. It was explained that if they leave at the proposed time, students would only miss a half day of school.

**Motion:**

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Steve Cole it was

**VOTED:** To approve the request for an overnight field trip for 24 Elements of Acting & Design and Theatre-in-Education students to go to New York from March 27-29.

**Motion Passed**

**Audrey McCarthy absent for vote**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRESENTATION:**

Middle School Principal Beth Raucci along with four members of the Middle School Council presented the Middle School Improvement Plan to the Committee. The presentation included the following:

**Teaching All Students:**

**Benchmarks**

- Therapy Dog Program
- Intervention program
- SOS
- RTI
- Transition Planning
- SEI initiative
- Strengthening Exploratory offerings in the next 3 years
- Adaptive technology
- EF strategies school wide

## **Curriculum and Assessment:**

### **Benchmarks**

- Teachers will collaborate as members of a professional learning community throughout the year to continue to implement the MMSEE by focusing on developing and implementing DDM's using student data, and managing all components through the Baseline Edge data system.
- ELA and Social Studies groups collaborate and align open response and expository writing to align with the Common Core Standards.
- Implementation and analysis of Engage NY
- Implementation, integration and alignment of Next Generation Science Standards
- Drifter Project in grade 8
- New Technology in the classroom (Introduce MA Technology standards and ISTE frameworks to begin the process of integrating these standards into the curriculum)

## **Families and Community:**

### **Benchmarks**

- Launch new district and school websites, calendars, announcements, activities and weekly updates
- Weekly Principal updates
- Improve service to our students in collaboration with Social Services in greater Newburyport
- Support the Parent Speaker Series, in collaboration with IC and RVCS, targeting pertinent parent topics
- Offer transition programs for students and families new to the district
- Increase outreach to community and stakeholders
- Partner with local business to increase PBE offerings and enhance curriculum
- Provide parents/guardians with a comprehensive overview middle school curriculum and programming

## **Professional Culture:**

### **Benchmarks**

- Implement use of Baseline Edge
- Support Implementation of DDM's
- Develop district-wide core ethical values for the 2015-2016 School Year

## **Discussion:**

**Steve Cole** had several questions:

- Strategies - costs related to this? Answer - there will be costs in time, but not this year.
- ELA - do you foresee a move toward humanities this year? Answer - Yes
- PTC - course for teachers - who pays for this. Assistant Superintendent Bik explained the Swasey Foundation.
- Enhancing explore - what is it now. Principal Raucci explained.

**Nick deKanter** thanked Principal Raucci and the School Council for the report. He stated he shared the concern with lack of resources, and that he was pleased with the level of excitement that comes out of her school.

**Bruce Menin** thanked Principal Raucci and the School Council for all their work on this. He had the following questions.

- Extended day - he hoped that conversations will continue.
- Hate incidents - what type of conversations should we be having - is there something we are missing. Answer - the most important thing is to model kindness. Superintendent Viccaro stated conversation concerning this should start in preschool.

**Michael Luekens** thanked Principal Raucci and the School Council. He inquired regarding school start time - is this a concern. Answer - Principal Raucci spoke about how important afternoon time is for Middle School students. It is worthy of throwing all on the table for discussion.

**Mayor Holaday** stated this is a solid plan and asked members of the School Council for their input. The four members spoke regarding CAD groups and how helpful Principal Raucci is for the them.

**Cheryl Sweeney** thanked Principal Raucci and the School Council.

#### **FY16 BUDGET UPDATE:**

Superintendent Susan Viccaro updated the Committee on the budget preparations. She explained she is having ongoing discussions with the Leadership Team. She will be requesting a fifth grade teacher, .5 time ELA teacher, expand nursing at the High School with an additional .5 nurse, safety/security at the High School - funds to make the entrance more secure, additional staffing at the High School, continuing SPED counseling support services. There is more work to do and she will continue to meet with the Leadership Team. The Public Hearing date concerning the FY16 school budget will be April 28, at 6:30 PM.

#### **Discussion:**

**Cheryl Sweeney** asked for a pie chart showing fixed costs and also asked, "where will the additional staff at the High School be used?" Superintendent Viccaro explained.

#### **SCHOOL CHOICE - VOTE TO OPT OUT FOR 2015-2016:**

**Cheryl Sweeney** stated the Committee needed to vote to opt out for 2015-2016.

**Steve Cole** said he would like to see dates when the Committee took votes regarding School Choice.

**Cheryl Sweeney** read the law concerning this.

**Steve Cole** said he would like to look back five years to see when we took votes for school choice.

**Superintendent Viccaro** discussed the law, Public Hearing.

**Michael Luekens** said the Public Hearing should take place before the next School Committee meeting then take the vote.

#### **Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** To table the School Choice Vote until the next meeting.

**Motion Passed**

## **Audrey McCarthy absent for vote**

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

Superintendent Viccaro reported on the following:

- Letter - Director of Pupil Services, Barbara Dee, will be retiring at the end of June.
- MCAS - coming up - state gave options - extended (Math/Science); Regular (ELA).
- Superintendent Advisory Council - discussed schedule - will have a forum.
- Nock 8th grader, Linsey Smith, will be presented with the Sonia Schreiber Weitz Upstander Award at the Annual Yom HaShoah Interfaith Commemoration on Monday, April 13, at 7 PM at the Higgins Jr/Genocide Studies, Salem State University.
- Ethan Cohodas and Leah Petty were selected as students of the month for February at NHS.
- Grade 11 student, Annie Clayton, awarded *6th Congressional District High School Art Show* "Best of School" award for "Reflection"
- Strategic Planning - Bill Cook - founder of the selected group we will be working with is coming to Newburyport for 2 ½ to 3 days of training. I will get back to the Committee with dates.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **Joint Education**

Cheryl Sweeney said they have not met

#### **Brown School Re-use Task Force**

Bruce Menin said they will be meeting this week on Wednesday at 6:30 at the Nock School. Mayor Holaday stated she met with developers. Bruce Menin said he toured the Amesbury facility and met with artists there - it was very eye opening.

#### **Policy**

Nick deKanter said they met Saturday for three hours and accomplished a lot. They discussed the following:

- Reviewed school facilities
- Service animal
- Lunch charging
- Legalities
- History of governance model

#### **Curriculum/Finance**

Steve Cole reported on the following:

- Year to date budget report - Superintendent reported we are in much better shape this year than last year. We are over in snow removal. We are tracking well.
- Circuit breaker

Michael Luekens reported they discussed the following:

- School safety
- Curriculum Priorities

- School Committee Priorities

Superintendent Viccaro will present a three year plan - where we are going.

Steve Cole reported on Chartwell's. We will go out to bid - costs are down - sales are up. We have ½ as much of a loss this year as last year.

NEF - Cheryl Sweeney stated that the NEF had a very successful Texas Hold 'Em Night.

Superintendent Viccaro discussed the High School lights/sound.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Steve Cole it was

**VOTED:** To adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM.

**Motion Passed**

**Audrey McCarthy absent for vote**