

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
Monday, November 17, 2014**

Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 7:37 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:

Mayor Donna Holaday called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM. Mayor Holaday called for a roll call, which found all member present. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment at this time.

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.
\$27,624.49

Motion Passed Unanimously

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.
\$408,281.63

Motion Passed Unanimously

Minutes:

On a motion by Nick deKantar and seconded by Michael Luekens was

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the School Committee Business Meeting minutes of Monday, November 3, 2014.

Motion Passed Unanimously

NHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:

NHS Student Representative Julia Bradley reported on the following:

- Club Fair went very well
- Color Day preparation is heating up; things are getting intense
- Nbpt. Police Dept. holding women's self-defense classes starting 11/20
- Winter sports are starting up, including a new ski team
- Poetry Soup is tomorrow in room 118

- Nov. 25th is the NHS Dessert Auction
- Not much planned for the end of November - hoping to have a dance before winter break

PHONICS IN OUR CURRICULUM:

Emily Russin, K-8 ELA Coordinator, presented the phonics curriculum used by teachers in the Newburyport Public Schools. Two sessions of training were held for teachers this summer.

Discussion:

Cheryl Sweeney inquired

- If a group of teachers had been formed to research this program.
- What steps did you take to decide in picking a program?
- How long has this been used? Ms. Russin explained.
- Ms. Sweeney also asked several questions concerning implementation and usage of the program.

Bruce Menin asked who was on the curriculum team. Answer - Angela Bik and Emily Russin

- Students with language challenges - how does this program affect them? Ms. Russin explained.

Nick deKanter inquired

- What is your observation - comments from teachers, how are students reacting to it. Ms. Russin explained that teachers are seeing students doing better.
- How have you communicated this change to parents? Ms. Russin explained that this has not been communicated as of yet.

Cheryl Sweeney asked, "how does this fit in to our word spelling program?" Ms. Russin said it fits fine. Ms. Bik said she went into classrooms and saw firsthand the positive results.

Bruce Menin asked, "how are we capturing what teachers are saying as to how students are doing and communicating to parents. Ms. Russin explained.

MA KINDERGARTEN ENTRY ASSESSMENT (MKEA):

Principal Amy Sullivan presented information to the Committee regarding this. This is year three of Mass KEA. We are Cohort 3. Race to the Top.

Discussion:

Superintendent Viccaro inquired regarding funding. Principal Sullivan and Ms. Bik explained.

Mayor Holaday asked

- If there were any considerations regarding full day Kindergarten and half day.
- What are the differences?

Nick deKanter asked

- How is data actionable data?
- If this weren't a mandate - would we do this? Ms. Sullivan said no and explained why.

Bruce Menin asked regarding license fee - is it the same if you are doing two or ten domains. Principal Sullivan and Ms. Bik explained.

Cheryl Sweeney asked Principal Sullivan to explain/show the Early Childhood Program flyer that she developed.

ACTIONABLE ITEMS FROM SCHOOL COMMITTEE SELF-EVALUATION:

Cheryl Sweeney passed out indicators, synopsis and suggested a retreat to discuss disparity on rankings.

Discussion:

Bruce Menin said this was a terrific idea and suggested having the attorney there.

Audrey McCarthy said someone should take minutes. Some are not measurable - make this a workable feedback.

Steve Cole said, look at some rankings to see where there is a continuum. Nick deKanter was volunteered to do this.

Nick deKanter said he would take ownership of the work.

Cheryl Sweeney suggested Dorothy Presser as facilitator.

Michael Luekens agreed that they should get together - agree to a facilitator.

Cheryl Sweeney asked if this should be one night or two?

Superintendent Viccaro said this is a lot to do in one night.

Nick deKanter agreed.

Bruce Menin said either.

Cheryl Sweeney said she would take it as two.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Susan Viccaro reported on the following:

Bresnahan School:

- NEF Dedication Night - Wednesday, November 19, at Nicholson Hall 7:30 - 9:00 PM
- Students/Staff will celebrate Clipper Pride on November 24
- Math Fair - December 11, 9:00 - 10:45 PM
- Dr. Andrew Chen observed math lessons on November 13 and will be back on December 11.

Molin School:

- Jeff Kinney, Author - visit on Tuesday the 18th
- 4th grade narrative writing unit
- 5th grade beginning informational writing
- 5th grade had field trip to Plimoth Plantation

Newburyport High School

- NHS Real World Design Challenge students and teacher Sarah Leadbeater went to Hanscom AFB last week and were awarded third place
- Thursday, November 20 - Parent meeting - high school/college credit at NECCO
- NHS received Advanced Placement honor roll status for first time. We are one of 547 districts across US to be recognized.
- This fall 16 students were trained as peer mediators
- Model UN traveled to Montreal on November 7
- Wednesday "Workforce of Future" 7:30 - 9:00 at Nicholson Hall
- Today at Arwood Machine - toured Guidance Staff

Assistant Superintendent Angela Bik spoke regarding Dr. Andrew Chen who was here last Thursday in classrooms observing math - he gave feedback to teachers. He will be back on December 11.

Bruce Menin inquired regarding support to parents - how are we going to support them. Ms. Bik said first they should speak to the classroom teachers.

Website - Cathy Manning/Superintendent had a conference call - Catapult - will check every page - we are very close.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Joint Education: Cheryl Sweeney reported they have not met.

Finance:

Steve Cole reported they met on November 13 and discussed

- Food Service Update
- Choice tuition update
- Superintendent software "Lets Talk" - purpose - info funneled to the right people
Cheryl Sweeney inquired re: cost - \$5,000

Policy:

Bruce Menin reported they have not met.

Curriculum

Mike Luekens - will meet tomorrow at 5:30. Will review minutes - budget development

Cheryl Sweeney extended an invitation to the Committee to the Donor reception. The NEF Lighthouse Auction last week was an unbelievable success.

Mayor Holaday thanked the Committee for the joint meeting with the City Council

Nick deKanter, Bruce Menin and Mayor Holaday attended a Chapter 70 funding meeting in Danvers.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:37 PM.

Motion Passed Unanimously