

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING**

Tuesday, February 24, 2015

Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 6:32 PM

Room 118
Cheryl Sweeney Presided

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

Absent: Mayor Donna Holaday

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

Vice-Chairman Cheryl Sweeney called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM. A roll call was taken. Mayor Donna Holaday was absent. All those present stood for for the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Steve Cole recognized retired teacher Peg Taranda and Mike Stone (husband of recently retired teacher Susan Stone) who both passed away recently. Mr. Cole gave a short bio of both. A moment of silence was held.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dr. Ralph Orlando, 4 Wm. Hall Drive **CONCERN:** Budget, Policy concerning bullying. Superintendent Susan Viccaro and Bruce Menin responded.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motions:

Warrants:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$25,125.29

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$337,906.22

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

Minutes:

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

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the School Committee Business Meeting minutes of Tuesday, January 20, 2015.

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

NHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:

Julia Bradley, NHS Student Representative reported on the following:

- Spirit week is in planning. Each day has a different theme, penny wars, fundraisers, going on throughout the week, trying to put together a pep rally at the end of the week.
- Seniors started the Book to Film project yesterday. This will be the last major project of high school.
- Poetry Soup will be held tomorrow night at Jabberwocky
- March 6 - NAHS leaves on the New York trip
- Science Fair will be held on February 26
- Scholarships
- Prom - the Juniors have started selling tickets to their prom which will take place in April.

BRESNAHAN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRESENTATION:

Principals Kristina Davis and Amy Sullivan along with members of the School Council presented the Bresnahan School Improvement Plan to the Committee. Program Categories included the following:

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, refining, and implementing DDM's, using student data, and managing all components through Baseline Edge data system.

Implement new programs with fidelity

Engage NY (PK-3)

Spell Links/Class Links Phonics Program (K-1 in 14.15 and Grade 2 in 15.16)

Teaching Strategies Gold (mandate for MKEA-Grades PK/K)

Implementation, integration and alignment of Next Generation Science Standards

Families and Community

Benchmarks

Launch new district and school websites with social media connections, electronic forms, and easier navigation.

Increase outreach to community and stakeholders.

Establish school guidelines for homework with input from staff and parents.

Provide parents and guardians with a comprehensive overview of PK-3 curriculum throughout the school year.

Professional Culture

Benchmarks

Increase opportunities for students to develop their civic understanding and appreciation of community contributions.

Develop district-wide core ethical values for the 2015-2016 School Year.

Teaching All students

Benchmarks

Increase learning opportunities for all learners.

Discussion:

Audrey McCarthy asked

- Concerning technology - do you have enough staff? Principals Davis and Sullivan explained.
- After school opportunities - do we need a late bus? Principal Sullivan said homework and difference in learning, teacher evaluation and an active and contributing council.

Michael Luekens thanked the Principals for the improvement plan. He asked if there were one or two things in it that were more important.

Bruce Menin said in terms of a two year plan concerning new programs on page 2, what is the frequency when data becomes available. Principal Sullivan said there is a variety of data that is used and she explained.

Nick deKanter inquired if they had accomplished what they set out to do. Both Principals explained.

Steve Cole asked what was going to be needed to fund and sustain this improvement. Both Principals and Assistant Superintendent Angela Bik explained.

School Council Member explained that this year two school communities came together. They are very active and have a real voice.

School Council Member explained that all goals were accomplished by the Principals. She said that she is looking forward to the Senior Center involvement.

Cheryl Sweeney thanked the Principals and School Council members.

NHS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRESENTATION:

Principal Mike Parent along with members of the NHS School Council presented the NHS School Improvement Plan to the Committee. Program Categories included the following:

Curriculum/Instruction

Benchmarks

Support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by personalizing instruction, engaging students as active in self-directed learners, engaging students and cross disciplinary learning, emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking, and applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks.

Complete the written curriculum using the school's common format that includes school-wide rubrics and relevant 21st century learning expectations.

School Culture

Benchmarks

Develop and implement a process to communicate individual and school-wide achievement of the 21st century learning expectations to students, their families and the community.

Develop and implement formal ongoing programs or processes to ensure that all students have an adult in school in addition to a school counselor who knows them well, and can assist them in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Scheduling

Benchmarks

Provide time for teachers to collaborate within and across content areas in order to analyze student achievement data, to examine current research, and to engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practices.

Analyze current school year and school day schedules.

Look at schedule process.

Resources

Benchmarks

Increase Staff

Improve Technology

Athletic fields

School safety

Discussion:

Nick deKanter congratulated the team for a most exciting, ambitious school improvement plan that he has seen. He asked that the Committee be kept in the loop.

Bruce Menin echoed what Mr. deKanter had to say. He was pleased to see the School Culture Survey and would like to hear back when the results are in.

Steve Cole said this was essential.

School Council Member asked what things did the Committee want to see in this.

Cheryl Sweeney said that the more the Committee could be informed the better.

Assistant Superintendent Bik said this is why the School Improvement Plans are so important.

Audrey McCarthy said that teachers stay after school one day a week and asked if this was so. She also asked if their days could be publicized more and put on the school website, so that parents would know the days. Principal Parent said that that one day was a minimum, but that many teachers stay after school more often. He said he would follow up on this.

Nick deKanter said we need to hear good things that teachers are doing. Toot your horn.

Mike Luekens thanked Principal Parent and the School Council for a good plan.

Bruce Menin said it was good to see the School Council really involved. This was a good plan.

Dr. Ralph Orlando, a School Council member said they did not come here for accolades. The High School has been neglected for many years - many items on this plan have been on the plan for several years - look at several items hard - we need a nurse, but we need dollars for teachers, we need technology, security. This school has been neglected and has some really big needs.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE PLANNING CALENDAR:

Michael Luekens has updated the planning calendar that was discussed at the January 20, School Committee meeting. This was the second reading and a vote was needed.

Motion

On a motion by Audrey McCarthy and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: To approve the School Committee Planning Calendar as presented.

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

COMMUNICATIONS AD-HOC:

Cheryl Sweeney said the Superintendent would like to run this as a Advisory Council.

Superintendent Viccaro said she wants to hear from the community.

Cheryl Sweeney said regarding Public Communication - they need to talk regarding the future of this.

Audrey McCarthy said people want to hear where we are going.

Cheryl Sweeney said we all need to be involved in this.

Nick deKanter said this could be a very valuable tool re: feedback from the community, but we have not been able to make it work. It is not a good use of our time - we have tried - they value a robust website.

Superintendent Viccaro said if we have a large number of parents interested in topics maybe we should use forums.

Nick deKanter said do coffee hours - play around with other uses.

Michael Luekens would like to see items from the 59 additional items - put on School Committee calendar.

Steve Cole said he would like to hear more concerning "Let's Talk!". If we have a hot topic people will come.

Cheryl Sweeney explained the School Committee would have a page on Let's Talk!. She would be responsible for monitoring this, and getting answers.

Bruce Menin said he has long been a proponent of Public Conversation and hesitates to give it up without something else to take its place.

Audrey McCarthy said that today people are busy - we can be reached by e-mail, text or phone. If a really hot topic comes up, we can schedule time for it. Public Conversation is not a good use of our time. Put it on a shelf and if we need to we can look at it again. Give Let's Talk! a chance.

Cheryl Sweeney asked the Superintendent how many Advisory Committee meetings she would have in a year.

Supt. Viccaro: Three

Superintendent Viccaro explained what is happening with "Let's Talk" and asked the Committee members to try using this.

Cheryl Sweeney asked what the cost would be. Superintendent Viccaro said we signed a two year contract for approximately \$5,000 a year.

Motion

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

VOTED: To end Public Conversation.

Discussion:

It was decided to update the rules and regulations to the Policy Committee

Motion Passed

4 Yes

2 No - Steve Cole, Bruce Menin

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Viccaro reported on the following:

- Snow days - We have had 5 snow days - we were originally scheduled for closure on the 18th of June, now we are at the 25th. Option - Good Friday as needed. The Dept. of Educ. has allowed us to have an extended alternative to MCAS. We may have to cancel one of our release days for this.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Cheryl Sweeney said we need to re-familiarize ourselves with the Superintendents evaluation.

The Superintendent has provided us with her smart goals.

Joint Education

Cheryl Sweeney said they have not met.

Finance

Steve Cole said they will meet on March 12.

Policy

Nick deKanter said they have met today. They discussed the finger printing policy, bullying policy, discipline policy and putting policies under one umbrella. There will be a meeting next Saturday, March 7 from 9 to 12.

Curriculum, Instruction Assessment & Accountability

Michael Luekens said the next meeting will be tomorrow the 25th.

Brown School Committee

Bruce Menin said there will be a meeting next week.

Bruce Menin said he went to a Commission on Diversity & Tolerance meeting last night. There will be a forum on Tuesday, April 7.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

VOTED: To adjourn the Business Meeting at 9:40 PM.

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent