

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**  
**Senior/Community Center, 331 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950**

**Tuesday, April 29, 2025**

Present: Mayor Sean Reardon, Juliet Walker, Andy Boger, Kathleen Shaw and Brian Callahan  
(Breanna Higgins and Sarah Hall absent)

**CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Vice Chair Juliet Walker called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:33 PM. Roll call found all members present except Sarah Hall and Breanna Higgins. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comments** - none

**Warrant**

**Motion:**

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Mayor Reardon it was

**VOTED:** to approve the Warrant in the amount of \$461,036.98 as presented.

**Motion Passed**

Breanna Higgins and Sarah Hall absent

**Minutes**

**Motion:**

On a motion by Mayor Reardon and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

**VOTED:** to adopt the minutes from the April 7, 2025 School Committee meeting with correction to page 6 (roll call vote = everyone was present and voted yes).

**Motion Passed**

Breanna Higgins and Sarah Hall absent

**Student Representative Report**

Theo Roberts presented the student report which included celebrating the arts with cast & crew of Newsies! at the Nock, and poetry readings and spring vacation trips at the high school.

**FY26 Budget**

Superintendent Sean Gallagher provided an overall budget summary, and presented a proposed FY26 Budget with a 2.96% City Appropriation increase over the FY25 Budget, and an overall budget increase of 1.27% over last year. The Superintendent also explained various challenges faced by the district, and spoke of several federal and state funding areas that remain uncertain. He answered various questions related to cost center increases between the four schools, use of school choice

revenue, school choice impact on NHS class sizes, status of union negotiations, Athletic Revolving account balance, and Circuit Breaker.

**Motion:**

On a motion by Mayor Reardon and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

**VOTED:** to adopt the FY26 Budget as presented.

**Motion Passed**

Mayor Reardon voted “present”

Breanna Higgins and Sarah Hall absent

**MSBA Accelerated Roof Project Update**

Facilities Director James McSweeney stated the roof projects for the High School and Nock Middle School are progressing well, and shared that the Owner’s project Manager and designer have been assigned. They will work with the design firm and Molly Ettenborough to determine the best course of action for the solar panels on the Nock Middle School roof. James will inform the School Committee if any requirements for a building committee are needed, as well as the status of the skate board park during the roof repair process.

**Northern Essex Community College – Whittier Technical High School Collaboration Study**

Mayor Sean Reardon explained the study was completed by the UMass Donahue Institute to explore the potential of some type of shared campus between Whittier Tech and Northern Essex Community College. He also provided a little background of the Task Force that is looking at possible changes to the agreement between the 11 communities. The Mayor will provide a presentation at one of the upcoming May school committee meetings.

**School Committee Meeting Schedule 2025-2026 - Draft**

Two versions of the meeting schedule were presented: one following the usual 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday schedule, and another version using a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday schedule from January 2026 to June 2026. Juliet Walker has not yet heard back from City Council regarding swapping the October 6 and November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting dates. As two members were absent from this meeting, a vote on the meeting schedule for 2025-2026 will be postponed until the May 5<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting.

**SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Finance Subcommittee**

Brian Callahan stated they met on April 17<sup>th</sup> and primarily discussed the budget. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 21 at 8:00AM.

**Policy Subcommittee**

Kathleen Shaw stated they will meet at 7PM on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Communications Subcommittee**

Brian Callahan stated they will meet on Thursday, May 1 at 4:30PM in the Nock library.

### **Teaching & Learning Subcommittee**

Juliet Walker stated the next meeting will be held on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee**

Mayor Sean Reardon will begin this process in June.

### **Superintendent's Report**

**Sewer Line Update:** Superintendent Gallagher stated that the NPS maintenance crew and DPS responded to a sewer line related problem at the high school. Facilities Director James McSweeney explained the inspection results and the repair process. The line has been cleared and the area has been cleaned up.

**FY26 School Choice Update:** The Superintendent shared that over 90 school choice applications have been submitted. Applications will be accepted no later than 5PM on May 1<sup>st</sup>, lotteries will be held on May 7. In addition, a vote to open five slots for grades 11 and 12 will be added to the May 5<sup>th</sup> School Committee agenda.

### **New Business**

- Mayor Sean Reardon will hold a FY26 Budget Public Forum at City Hall on May 6<sup>th</sup> at 7PM.
- Brian Callahan stated that National Grid will be doing work around the Carter and Broad Street area. Additional work will be happening at various areas April 15 through November 30th. Mayor Reardon will find out more information, and Superintendent Gallagher will notify the bus company.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

#### **Motion:**

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Mayor Reardon it was

**VOTED:** to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 7:54PM.

#### **Motion Passed**

Breanna Higgins and Sarah Hall absent

Student Report for School Committee

April 29, 2025

Submitted by: Theo Roberts

Location: Newburyport Senior Center

### **Nock News:**

#### **Celebrating the Arts at Nock**

Hats off to the cast and crew of *Newsies*! The Nock Theater Department continues to amaze and inspire. Under the direction of Brian Nickerson, our students delivered an incredible performance, showcasing their talent, dedication, and collaborative spirit.

#### **MCAS Assessments Underway**

MCAS Math, Science, and Civics assessments are scheduled over the next two weeks. Our Math team and students have been working tirelessly throughout the year in their preparations.

#### **Nock Student Showcase – Thursday, June 5**

Mark your calendars! On June 5, we'll be hosting the Nock Student Showcase—an evening dedicated to celebrating student growth, learning, and achievement. This event reflects our commitment to the Portrait of a Graduate and offers families a meaningful opportunity to reconnect with the work happening in our classrooms.

### **High School News:**

Student poets Cady Seaton, Lucius Nelson, Nadia Toth, and Sofie Lafranchise wowed the audience at the Newburyport Literary Festival this past Saturday with their poetry reading. The students were the "opening act" for internationally acclaimed poets Rhina Espaillat and Martin Espada.

During the vacation, two trips overseas took place, one to France and Spain and the other to Central Europe. Both provided a tremendous experience and supported the objectives of the Global Citizenship Program. Thank you to our chaperones, Mary Rakoski, Aileen Maconi, Bobby Falzone, Stephanie Phillips and Gary Matloff for making this experience possible. And last, we want to acknowledge the students who participated. They served as strong ambassadors of the Newburyport community, and the community should be proud.