

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING
High School Library, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

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

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Mayor Sean Reardon called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:30 PM. Roll call found all members present, except Breanna Higgins. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. At this point in the meeting, Juliet Walker took over.

Public Comments:

Carrie O'Donnell, 9 Tilton Street, Newburyport

Warrant:

Motion:

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

VOTED: to approve the Warrant in the amount of \$790,819.45 as presented.

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins absent

Minutes

Motion:

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

VOTED: to adopt the minutes from the February 3, 2025 School Committee meeting with a correction to page 3 (change successors to successes in the Communications Subcommittee section).

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins absent

Student Representative Report

Theo Roberts presented the student report that included the Bresnahan's 100th Day of School Celebration, the annual Great Postcard Chase at the Molin, the upcoming Student vrs Parent Basketball Fundraiser at the Nock, and the high school's participation in the USA Biology Olympics Open Exam.

Funding for MSBA Accelerated Roof Project – Rupert A. Nock Middle School and Newburyport High School

Facilities Director James McSweeney provided a brief overview of the roof repair projects for the Nock and High School. He explained that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) requires all projects over \$1.5 million to include a Design and Owners Project Management (OPM)

fee. The district needs to solidify monies needed to pay for the Design and the OPM firm and at this time is requesting School Committee and the City approval to appropriate funds for both schools. Mayor Reardon inquired about the program's reimbursement rate. Answer: 43% reimbursement rate for reimbursable costs.

Motion – for Rupert Nock Middle School:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: As required by the Massachusetts School Building Authority, the district is seeking School Committee approval for the City of Newburyport to appropriate the amount of two hundred fifteen thousand dollars (\$215,000) for the purpose of paying costs of Design and Owners Project Management Fees for the Roof Replacement at the Rupert Nock Middle School in accordance with Policy DD – Grants, Proposals and Special Projects.

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins absent

Motion – for Newburyport High School:

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

VOTED: for the City of Newburyport to appropriate the amount of two hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$275,000) for the purpose of paying costs of Design and Owners Project Management Fees for the Roof Replacement at the Newburyport High School, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA (in accordance with Policy DD – Grants, Proposals and Special Projects).

Motion Passed

Breann Higgins absent

Consideration and review of the NEF's request to name Room 210 at NHS in honor of Jane G. Politis

The School Committee reviewed the background information provided by the NEF.

Motion:

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

VOTED: to approve naming rights for Room 210 in loving memory of Jane G. Politis in accordance with Policy FF – Naming New Facilities.

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins absent

Consideration and review of the NEF's request to name Room 112 at NHS in honor of Cindy M. Johnson

The School Committee reviewed the background information provided by the NEF.

Motion:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Mayor Reardon it was

VOTED: to approve the naming rights in honor of Cindy M. Johnson for Room 112 – NHS Video Lab in accordance with Policy FF – Naming New Facilities.

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins absent

2025-2026 School Calendar

This was the second reading of the 2025-2026 calendar. Superintendent Sean Gallagher explained the modifications to this version of the proposed FY25-26 calendar.

Motion:

On a motion by Mayor Reardon and seconded by Sarah Hall it was

VOTED: to approve the 2025-2026 School Calendar as presented, in accordance with Policy IC/ICA School Year Calendar.

Motion Passed

Breanna Higgins absent

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**Finance Subcommittee**

Brian Callahan reported a meeting was held virtually on February 13th at 8:00AM due to inclement weather. They discussed the new user fees next year for the ski teams, NYS contract & gym fees, the general budget and the tentative agreement with NTA. The next meeting is scheduled for 8:00AM on March 13th. Brian also stated there will be a Joint FINCOM & City Council meeting on Thursday, March 20th (time = tba).

Policy Subcommittee:

Kathleen Shaw reported they met February 10th and reviewed several technology related policies, as well as the proposed language for the Competency Determination submitted by the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee.

Communications Subcommittee

Sarah Hall stated the next meeting will be held from 5-6PM on February 27th at the Nock library.

Teaching & Learning Subcommittee

Sarah Hall stated that the next meeting will be held on March 6th.

Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee: have not met

Superintendent's Report

FY26 Budget Update: Superintendent Sean Gallagher stated the district continues to work on next year's budget, as well as negotiations with three unions. He is hoping to present a Level of Service Budget for the March 3rd meeting.

AD Hiring Status: Superintendent Gallagher stated that an announcement will be made once contract negotiations with the finalists have been completed.

Business Manager Hiring Process Update: Superintendent Gallagher stated the Advisory Subcommittee met last week. Recommendations were made to change the title to “Director of Finance & Operations”, and additional places to post the position were suggested. The Advisory Subcommittee will meet again in a few weeks.

New Business

- Kathleen Shaw stated that SEPAC will meet at 6PM on Thursday, February 27 in the Nock Library. Future meetings will be held on 4/17, 5/15 and 6/12 in the Nock Library.
- Sarah Hall was invited to join the cell phone dialog planning committee that will be made up of staff, parents and students, and led by Lynne Cote and Eric Schildge.
- Mayor Reardon reminded everyone that the State of the City Address and the Community Awards will begin at 7PM on Wednesday, February 26th at City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 7:07PM and move to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing possible contract negotiations and/or legal matters, and will not reconvene in open session.

Motion Passed

Roll Call Vote

School Committee Member	Vote
Mayor Sean Reardon	Yes
Sarah Hall	Yes
Andrew Boger	Yes
Brian Callahan	Yes
Breanna Higgins	absent
Kathleen Shaw	Yes
Juliet Walker	Yes

Newburyport School Committee - Student Report

February 25, 2025

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At the Bresnahan School, 3rd Graders in Jill Mailoux's class have been working hard on their letters to our Senior Center Pen Pals. They started a program where 3rd graders are paired up with local seniors to correspond with throughout the year. They plan to have a meet and greet in may for the pen pals to finally meet one another.

Bresnahan students also recently celebrated 100 days of school this year. A huge thank you to the PTO, the Newburyport Fire Department, and Ken Parsigian (also known as Zero the Hero) for making the day so special. Zero the Hero arrived on top of a firetruck with kindergarteners ready outside to greet him and practice their counting before returning to their classrooms. They also showed him their collections and took class photos, and did some fun experiments and crafts with numbers.

4th graders at the Molin are preparing for their study of the different states in our country with the annual "Great Postcard Chase". Each class will be collecting postcards from each of the 50 states. These are mailed directly to the Molin School from the state of origin, and are used as resources to discover the unique characteristics of each state. Additionally, the PTO-sponsored Molin Music Bingo Night will be returning in March.

The Nock School will be hosting a Student vs. Parent Basketball Fundraiser on March 26th at 6 PM to support the 7th and 8th grade overnight trips. Students and parents will face off in two separate games, and the winners will compete against a team of Newburyport faculty members. The Nock is currently in great need of parents to play the games. There are currently 2 signed up, and they would love to have at least 10 to play against the students. There will be halftime festivities and plenty of snacks and drinks. Admission will be \$5. Any parents interested should email Principal Markos.

At the High School, the Global Scholars Club recently completed a week of community service on Marine Conservation in the Dominican Republic. 24 students and 4 teachers worked with Fundacion Verde Profundo restoring a coral reef and planting mangroves in Boca Chica's lagoon. Students started each day with a 20 to 30 minute class explaining the purpose and science behind their work. Students also got to play basketball with local children, donating baseball supplies from NHS. The 7 to 12 year olds beat our team quite badly! Some students who went on this trip are doing college credit through Southern New Hampshire University and EF Tours. Other students are receiving high school credit through EF's accredited education program.

I would also like to congratulate Lucius Nelson, who will represent NHS at the Poetry Out Loud competition on March 8th, and the Real World Design Challenge, who are at it again with a national championship. This year's challenge involves designing an unmanned aircraft system that can transport a given group of supplies within a specific amount of time to support wildfire management.

Lastly, 10 NHS students recently participated in the USA Biology Olympics Open Exam. Objectives of the exam include nurturing the curiosity of young biologists, developing their interests in life sciences, encouraging the growth of the international network of biology, and propelling excellence in young leaders. Congratulations to Shea Hoffman, Samantha Johnson, Madeline Jackman, Katherine Kebler, Elise Kennedy, Sophie Maneikis, Courtney Metzdorf, Emily Stick, Noah Tarkan, and Dannaleigh Walsh, and thank you to Ms. Colleen Fallon for promoting and facilitating this opportunity for our students.