

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS**

**School Committee Business Meeting  
6:30PM**

**Monday, June 2, 2025**

SC Business Meeting Agenda June 2, 2025  
SC Business Meeting Agenda Notes June 2, 2025  
SC Warrant June 2, 2025  
SC Business Meeting Minutes May 5, 2025  
SC Business Meeting Minutes May 19, 2025  
Cell Phone Community Dialogue Feedback  
Student Services Department Year In Review  
Superintendent's Report

Newburyport Public Schools  
School Committee Business Meeting  
Monday, June 2, 2025 at 6:30PM

Sr./Community Center, 331 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86771555463?pwd=ru84rnoBCPg2Ct03jNF4qL2mwuBTG9.1>  
Meeting ID: 867 7155 5463  
Passcode: 754610

*The Mission of the Newburyport Public Schools, the port where tradition and innovation converge, is to ensure each student achieves intellectual and personal excellence and is equipped for life experiences through a system distinguished by students, staff, and community who: - practice kindness and perseverance - celebrate each unique individual - value creativity; experiential, rigorous educational opportunities; scholarly pursuits; and life-long learning - provide the nurturing environments for emotional, social, and physical growth - understand and embrace their role as global citizens.*

**Please note:** The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. The meeting will be televised locally live on Comcast Channel 9 & streamed via <https://ncmhub.org/share/channel-9/>.

**School Committee Business Meeting Agenda (6:30PM)**

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance
2. Executive Session (6:30 - 7:00 PM) – Vote  
*Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21 (a) (3) for the purpose of discussing strategy as it relates to non-contract related business, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee, as declared by the Chair. Will reconvene in Open session.*

**School Committee Business Meeting Agenda - Continued (7:00PM)**

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. \*Warrant – possible Vote
4. \*Meeting Minutes 5/5/2025 and 5/19/2025 – possible Vote
5. Student Representative Report
6. Cell Phones – NHS Community Dialogue
7. Special Education Programming Overview
8. \*Superintendent's Contract – possible Vote
9. Subcommittee Updates
  - a. Finance Subcommittee – Brian Callahan
  - b. Policy Subcommittee – Kathleen Shaw
  - c. Communications Subcommittee – Sarah Hall
  - d. Teaching & Learning Subcommittee – Breanna Higgins
  - e. Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee – Mayor Sean Reardon
10. Superintendent's Report: *Senior Activities (Clap Out, Scholarship Night, Promenade), STEM Showcase and Superintendent Advisory Council Meeting*
11. School Committee Summer Retreat Discussion
12. New Business

\* Possible Vote

**Adjournment**

\*\* The School Committee reserves the right to call **executive session**, as provided under Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2), of the General Laws to discuss strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations, collective bargaining and/or potential litigation.

**Newburyport Public Schools**  
**School Committee Business Meeting**  
**June 2, 2025 at 6:30PM**

Sr./Community Center, 331 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

**AGENDA NOTES**

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**School Committee Business Meeting Agenda - Continued (7:00PM)**

3. \*Warrant – *possible Vote*
4. \*Meeting Minutes 5/5/2025 and 5/19/2025 – *possible Vote*
5. Student Representative Report: *NHS student representative will provide the report.*
6. Cell Phones – NHS Community Dialogue  
*Principal Andy Wulf, NHS Librarian Lynne Cote, and Nock ELA Teacher Eric Schildge will discuss the Cell Phone Community Dialogue that took place on May 13, 2025, their findings and recommended changes to the high school's cell phone use policy. (see attached)*
7. Special Education Programming Overview  
*Director of Student Support Services Brad Brooks, and Program Directors Elise Comeau and Jeanna Guardino will present "student services department year in review" (see attached)*
8. \*Superintendent's Contract – *possible Vote* - *Vice Chair Juliet Walker*
9. Subcommittee Updates
  - a. Finance Subcommittee – Brian Callahan
  - b. Policy Subcommittee – Kathleen Shaw
  - c. Communications Subcommittee – Sarah Hall
  - d. Teaching & Learning Subcommittee – Breanna Higgins
  - e. Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee – Mayor Sean Reardon
10. Superintendent's Report: *Senior Activities (Clap Out, Scholarship Night, Promenade), STEM Showcase and Superintendent Advisory Council Meeting*
11. School Committee Summer Retreat Discussion: *The retreat is currently scheduled to take place on Monday, August 4, 2025 from 4:00PM – 8:00PM in the high school library. Members will discuss the date/time, and possible agenda ideas.*
12. New Business

\* Possible Vote

**FYI: Upcoming Dates:**

- ✓ Joint FINCOM & Communications Subcommittee meeting: Tuesday, June 3 @ 6:00PM
- ✓ Teaching & Learning Subcommittee meeting: Wednesday, June 4 @ 6:30PM
- ✓ Nock School Council meeting: Friday, June 6 @ 8:15AM
- ✓ Policy Subcommittee meeting: Monday, June 9 @ 7:00PM
- ✓ FINCOM meeting: Thursday, June 12 @ time TBA
- ✓ SEPAC meeting: Thursday, June 12 @ 6:00PM
- ✓ School Committee Business meeting: Monday, June 16 @ 6:30PM

# School Committee Warrant

**FY25-WARRANT 8150**

**A-Warrant**

**June 2, 2025**

<b>Warrant 8150</b>	<b>\$ 359,162.77</b>
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<b>A Warrant</b>	<b>\$ 56,140.64</b>
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<b>Total of Warrant</b>	<b>\$ 415,303.41</b>
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**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**  
**Library @ High School, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950**

**Monday, May 5, 2025**

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

**CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Vice Chair Juliet Walker called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:32 PM. Roll call found all members present. 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 \$418,211.50 as presented.

**Motion Passed**

**Minutes**

**Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to adopt the minutes for the April 2<sup>nd</sup>, April 15<sup>th</sup>, and April 29<sup>th</sup> School Committee meetings.

**Motion Passed**

**Student Recognition**

Superintendent Sean Gallagher presented a certificate of appreciation to Theo Roberts for his hard work, dedication and leadership as the high school's student representative to the School Committee over the past two years.

**Student Representative Report**

Theo Roberts presented the student report which included the Parent Speaker visitor Dr. Peter Gray and the *Gratitude Garland* project at the Bresnahan, and the spring play and the upcoming cell phone community dialogue at the high school.

**Introduction – New Director of Finance & Operations**

Superintendent Sean Gallagher introduced Ethan Manning as the new Director of Finance & Operations.

### **NHS Investment Club Presentation**

Superintendent Sean Gallagher introduced club leaders, high school students Colin Fuller, Gregory D'Ambrosio and Hunter McCormick. They discussed membership, various club activities, things they've learned and the member's experiences managing the club's portfolio. Funding for the Investment Club is donated by the NEF.

### **NHS Media Lab Presentation**

Superintendent Sean Gallagher and Facilities Director James McSweeney provided an update of the work being done for the new media lab at the high school. They reviewed various tasks that are in process, as well as anticipated dates for deliveries and/or quotes. Mr. McSweeney's presentation also included several pictures of the work currently underway in the lab.

### **2025-2026 School Choice Grades - 11 & 12**

Superintendent Sean Gallagher provided a brief summary of choice registration numbers. The Superintendent requested approval for five spots in grades 11 and 12, as well as five additional spots in grade 6, and one additional spot in grade 1.

### **Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to approve five spaces in grades 11 and 12, five additional spaces in grade 6 and one additional space in grade 1.

### **Motion Passed**

Andy Boger voted present

### **2025 – 2026 School Committee Meeting Schedule**

Juliet Walker explained that version 2 of the proposed meeting schedule retains the regular Monday schedule through December 2025, then moves meetings to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday each month beginning in January 2026.

### **Motion:**

On a motion by Andy Boger and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

**VOTED:** to approve version 2 of the School Committee Business Meeting schedule as presented in the packet.

### **Motion Passed**

## **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **Finance Subcommittee**

Brian Callahan stated the next meeting will be held on May 21, 2025.

### **Policy Subcommittee**

Kathleen Shaw stated they will meet on May 14, 2025.

### **Teaching & Learning Subcommittee**

Breanna Higgins reported they last met on April 15<sup>th</sup>. The agenda included an overview of the new special education administrative structure by Brad Brooks.

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

Mayor Sean Reardon will begin this process in June.

### **Communications Subcommittee**

Sarah Hall stated they met on May 1<sup>st</sup>, and the agenda included a review of several social media policies, the upcoming budget meeting and the community cell phone dialogue.

### **SEPAC**

Kathleen Shaw said the next meeting will be held Thursday (May 15<sup>th</sup>).

### **Superintendent's Report**

Tennis Court Update: Superintendent Gallagher provided a status of the work completed to date, as well as upcoming work that is scheduled to be completed by the end of May.

### **New Business**

- Mayor Sean Reardon reminded everyone of the Academic Awards night at the high school on Wednesday night (May 7<sup>th</sup>).
- Sarah Hall shared that the high school production of *Into the Woods* will be happening May 8th through May 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **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 7:53PM.

#### **Motion Passed**

## **Newburyport School Committee - Student Report**

May 5, 2025

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### **Francis T. Bresnahan Elementary School**

Before April break, a group of Bresnahan teachers, along with Superintendent Gallagher Assistant Superintendent Furlong, had the opportunity to have dinner and a discussion with Dr. Peter Gray, a developmental psychologist and professor at Boston College. Dr. Gray has studied the impact that societal and educational structures have on child development, and how that information can inform our education practices. The discussion centered around how educators can have a positive impact on students' happiness, wellbeing, and learning during their time at school. I'd like to thank Dr. Gray for his investment in our community and NYS for sponsoring his visit through their Parent Speaker Series.

Additionally, the Bresnahan is continuing a growing tradition with the *Gratitude Garland* project. Educators are challenging themselves and students to identify and celebrate all of the things that they are grateful for by creating a paper garland made of individual expressions of gratitude. Each link in the garland represents a moment, person, or appreciated idea. Last year, the garland wrapped around three sides of the building, and this year staff is aiming to wrap around the entire school. It is a beautiful reminder of the power of thankfulness and the strength of our community.

There is no news tonight from the Molin or Nock Schools, so we will now move on to the High School.

### **Newburyport High School**

The spring play "Into the Woods" opened this past weekend, and will continue this week on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Nearly 50 students join the cast, crew, and orchestra, along with NPS Performing Arts Faculty Brian Nickerson, Risa Annicciaro, Kathy Sheperd, Steve Cohen, and our very own Sarah Hall on the flute.

Additionally, the high school will host a community dialogue around the topic of cell phones in school, arranged by a group of students, teachers, and parents. Led by faculty members Eric Schildge and Lynne Cote, the team has read literature and conducted interviews to help decide on the structure and questions to guide the dialogue. The conversation will be held on Tuesday, May 13th at the high school from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM. Thank you to parents Kristen Vicente, Sarah Hall, Kate Suchecki; and students Caroline Jones, David Pearce, Lucy Rimer, Isla Trail, Tommy Rich; and teacher Kristen Prusinski for being a part of the planning team.



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

**Monday, May 19, 2025**

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

**CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Vice Chair Juliet Walker called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:31 PM. Roll call found all members present. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Executive Session:**

**Motion:**

On a motion at 6:33PM by Mayor Reardon and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

**VOTED:** to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy as it relates to collective bargaining with the AFSCME Union, as well as non-contract related business, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee.

**Motion Passed**

**Roll Call Vote**

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

***School Committee returned to regular business meeting – call to order at 7:13PM***

**Public Comments** - none

**Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to move #8 in the meeting agenda to be heard first (Innovation Career Pathways Grant Update)

**Motion Passed**

**Innovation Career Pathways Grant Update**

Superintendent Gallagher introduced Dr. Erin Hobbs and Principal Andy Wulf, and thanked them for their hard work and efforts with the high school's Innovation Career Pathways programs. Dr. Hobbs'

presentation covered the purpose of the Pathway programs, industry partners, and the two new Innovation Career Pathways (Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare & Social Assistance). She explained the technical, required and advanced courses needed for each program, as well as spoke about the growth of student interest in these programs, certifications, grants, and how funding is spent.

### **Warrant**

#### **Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to approve the Warrant in the amount of \$481,638.50 as presented.

#### **Motion Passed**

### **Student Representative Report**

Logan MacKnight presented the student report which included Senior Center pen pals, Steam Expo, and field trips at the Bresnahan; a STEM Expo, special visitor assembly and a Dollar Drive at the Molin; Fishbowl discussions, Volunteerism Week, and the sustainable living project with 6<sup>th</sup> graders at the Nock, as well as Credit for Life Fair and Senior week activities at the high school.

### **Collective Bargaining Agreement between Newburyport Teachers Association (NTA) and Newburyport School Committee for period September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2028**

#### **Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to ratify the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Newburyport Teachers Association and the School Committee for a collective bargaining agreement for the period September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2028.

#### **Motion Passed**

### **Roll Call Vote**

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

### **Newburyport's Whittier School Committee Rep**

Mary DeLai shared that Graduation will be held on May 29<sup>th</sup> at 7PM and the prom will be held at the Blue Ocean on May 27<sup>th</sup>. This year six Newburyport students will graduate from Whittier. Of this year's graduates, 41% will enter the workforce, 22% will attend 2-year colleges, and 28% will attend 4-year colleges. Superintendent Lynch will attend the City Council's budget meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mary also spoke about the Whittier budget, as well as the state's upcoming vote on May 20<sup>th</sup> related to the admission process at vocational schools.

### **Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Building Informational Update**

Mayor Reardon provided a brief summary of the Whittier Technical High School / Northern Essex Community College collaboration study. All eleven towns must sign a letter of agreement by July 1<sup>st</sup>. He explained that Newburyport's shared cost of the feasibility study would be \$166K.

### **Newburyport High School Cell Phone Community Dialogue**

Sarah Hall stated this community event was a success with over 100 people attending. She explained the process, as well as how participants were split into mixed groups led by trained facilitators. Seventy-six exit tickets were completed and submitted into a Google form by attendees. The team would like to present their findings at the June 2<sup>nd</sup> School Committee meeting.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **Finance Subcommittee**

Brian Callahan stated the next meeting will be held on May 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:00AM.

### **Policy Subcommittee**

Kathleen Shaw stated they will meet next on June 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM.

### **Teaching & Learning Subcommittee**

Breanna Higgins explained their May meeting was cancelled, and they will meet again in June.

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

Mayor Sean Reardon will have an update at the next meeting.

### **Communications Subcommittee**

Sarah Hall stated their next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>.

## **Superintendent's Report**

Waterfront Music Festival: The Superintendent attended this popular event over the weekend that included many musicians in grades K through 12. He thanked everyone that participated, as well as the district's music teachers for their hard work, and the NEF for supporting this event each year.

ADL Breakfast: Appx. 250 students, educators, state officials and law enforcement personnel from the local area attended the annual Anti-Defamation League Breakfast. Superintendent Gallagher was able to attend, along with several students and two teachers from the high school.

### **Jean Kirkpatrick Room Dedication Ceremony**

Superintendent Gallagher attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade classroom dedication for Ms. Jean Kirkpatrick by the NEF and Institution for Savings.

### **Peace Prize Awards**

This year 12 students and 2 adults were recognized at the annual Peace Prize Awards night hosted by the Newburyport Human Rights Commission.

### City Council Budget Dates

Superintendent Gallagher reminded everyone about the City Council budget meetings on June 5<sup>th</sup> and June 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **New Business**

SEPAC: Kathleen Shaw reported that SEPAC met last Thursday (May 15<sup>th</sup>). This was a great meeting, attended by Brad Brooks and the school adjustment counselors.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

#### **Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 8:13PM.

#### **Motion Passed**

Submitted by: Logan MacKnight

Location: Senior Center

**Bresnahan News:**

Last week, third graders in Mrs. Mailloux's class finally met their Senior Center pen pals after eight months of writing letters back and forth. It was heartwarming to see the genuine friendships that formed, and we're excited to continue this wonderful tradition. A big thank you to Mary Kelly, Sara Landry, and Liz Walsh from the Senior Center for helping to coordinate, and to Jill Mailloux, her class, and all the seniors who participated!

This is a busy time for field trips! First graders visited the Great Bay Science Center to learn about ecosystems last week. This week kindergarteners are exploring the Dover Children's Museum, 2nd graders are going to theatre in the Open and third graders are heading to Spencer-Peirce Farm this week. Thank you to our PTO for helping make these trips possible by funding the buses and keeping them accessible for all students.

Over the weekend, several Bresnahan students performed at the Waterfront Festival. Huge thanks to Gardner Rulon-Miller and the Performing Arts team for putting on a fantastic show, and to the NEF for supporting the event. Our kids love performing!

Looking ahead, we're excited for the STEAM Expo this week! Over 16 local STEAM volunteers will share their passions with students in grades 1 through 3. We're especially grateful for our NHS, Nock, and Molin student volunteers, and for Lori Towle from Code & Circuit, who's bringing Spot the Robot Dog. It's going to be a great day, and all School Committee members are invited to attend!

**Molin News:**

National Book Award finalist and TED speaker Jarrett J. Krosoczka is set to captivate students and educators alike as he takes the stage for special assemblies at the Molin School on May 23rd. Known for his engaging storytelling and impactful illustrations, Krosoczka will present the Molin community with multimedia presentations on his creative journey and the process he takes to create his award-winning books! Molin School has partnered with Our Neighbor's Table for a condiments and Dollar Drive = One Dollar, One Meal, One HUGE Difference"; The Dollar Drive runs from 5/12-5/23; As of 5/19: the Molin Students, Staff, and Community have provided: 5,375 meals!! (\$5,375)

Molin STEM EXPO is June 6th.

**Nock News:**

This week has been an exciting one across all grade levels, showcasing the depth of our students' learning experiences.

### **Grade 8**

Our 8th grade ELA classes are engaging in Fishbowl discussions around *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This week, they are joined by special guests—our Senior Book Buddies—who will participate in the conversations. Our 8th graders will take the lead in welcoming their partners and escorting them to the classrooms, continuing to foster intergenerational connection and deeper literary dialogue.

### **Grade 7**

Our 7th grade students are preparing for their annual Volunteerism Week, a service-learning tradition rooted in civic responsibility. As part of this initiative, students will tend to local cemeteries, helping maintain gravestones and participating in the annual flag planting project in honor of veterans for Memorial Day. This meaningful work instills pride, reverence, and a strong sense of community stewardship.

### **Grade 6**

Last week, our 6th graders visited Back Country Tiny Homes as part of their ongoing interdisciplinary project focused on sustainable living. Through hands-on learning and direct engagement with the tiny home movement, students were able to see the behind the scenes of a construction of a "tiny home". They were able to hear about how engineers and contractors refine their designs and apply real-world insights. 6th Grade will finish the year in their math classes designing and "tiny home" as part of the last unit.

### **High School News:**

On Thursday, May 22, the Junior Class will participate in the Credit for Life Fair which is organized and sponsored by the Institution for Savings. This activity teaches financial literacy and allows students to manage a monthly budget using the standard salary of a 25-year old in their profession of interest.

Next week is senior week and there are many events that offer the opportunity for the community to come and celebrate:

- May 29 - Senior Promenade on the Front Lawn (5:00 PM)
- May 31 - Senior Class Family Car Parade - Spectators can watch along High Street + the NHS Front Lawn (10:00 AM)
- June 1 - Graduation Day (11:00 AM)

2025 Newburyport

# Cell Phone Community Dialogue Feedback

Lynne Cote, NHS Library Media Specialist  
Eric Schildge, Nock ELA Teacher

## Our Purpose

To design conversations  
that build a foundation  
of trust & mutual  
understanding

- To bring **students, educators, and community members** together
- To **listen, share, and ask questions** about each other's experience on the ways phones shape our daily lives inside and outside of school.
- To **support our district** in crafting a policy on cell phone use in Newburyport schools.



# Why Dialogue?

To allow people to share about themselves in order to expand what others know about them and reveal how their stories tell others about who they are

How our lived experiences shape how we feel about difficult issues, how we perceive the world and how these stories impact our values



# Cell Phone Dialogue Timeline

Creating  
Mapping  
Designing  
Running



## February

Create  
Committee

3 Parents  
3 Teachers  
5 NHS Students

## March

Bring to the table  
ALL viewpoints on  
the issue in order to  
develop interview  
questions for the  
community

## March/April

Interview  
29 Diverse  
Community  
Members

Students, teachers,  
parents, community  
leaders, administrators

## April

Develop and Test  
dialogic questions

Write Script  
Run pre-dialogues  
Train facilitators

## May

Design & Post  
Advertising

**Run Dialogue**

# Interview Process

**11 committee members interviewed  
29 community members**

## What we learned



Current use of classroom cell phone holders may promote student use of phones during passing time since students need to take phone out of holder at the end of class.

Students need to be taught Self Regulation Skills.

Parents are looking for more social growth without technology.

Social media is used as a means of communication across the school's programming.

Current policy is inconsistently enforced, Sometimes difficult for teachers to implement. Focus on relationships versus a battle.

# The Dialogue Attendees

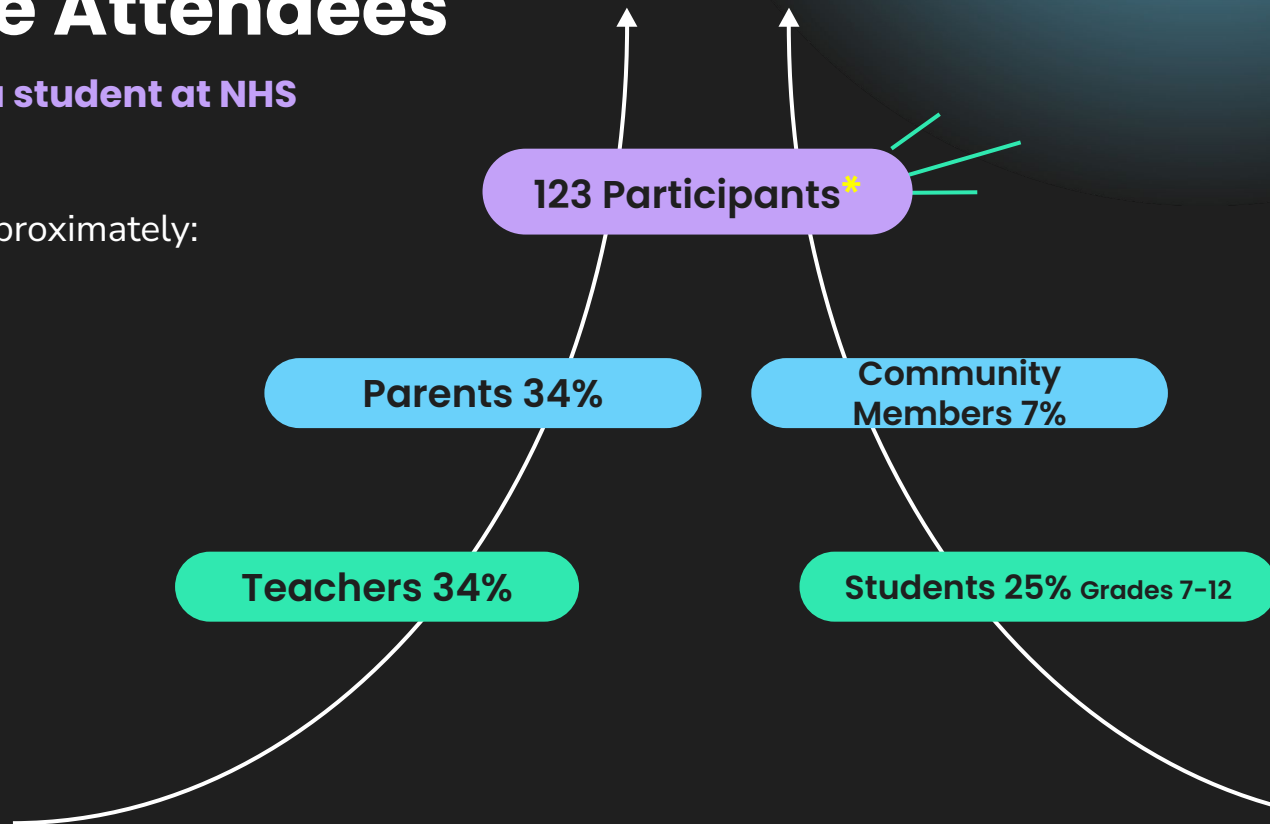
**55% of attendees have a student at NHS**

Each Table was set with approximately:

- A Teacher Facilitator
- 2 Parents
- 1 community member
- 1 Teacher Participant
- 2 Students

## **\*Participants**

78 dialogue attendees  
29 community interviews  
16 Facilitators



# Our Dialogic Approach

## Think about...

**Think about:** One habit or routine that is part of your day.

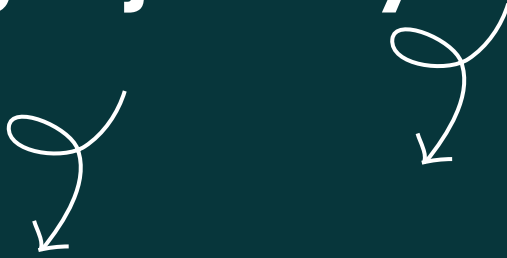
**Share:** How this habit reflects something that is important to you.



- Take 15 seconds to reflect & write
- Turn to a partner - in 15 seconds respond
- When the bell rings - the partner has 15 seconds to respond



# Dialogue journey



Reflect/Write →

Go Around →

Questions →

Closing →

Take away →

## Your Story

All participants respond to the same question

Answer the question based on personal experience

## All Voices Heard Equally

Each person has the same amount of time to respond

## Questions of Curiosity

Make connections  
See things in a new way

## Respect & Honor Different Opinions

Think about what we learned from each other and how our stories impact our opinions

## Broaden our View

Perspectives may differ but often the **values** or **hopes** and dreams are **similar**

# Our Dialogue Questions



## Question #1

**Think About:** Several ways YOU interact with your cell phone include helpful and unhelpful times.

**Share:** What does the way you use your cell phone in your own life tell you about what is important to you?



## Question #2

How do your values surrounding your OWN cell phone use help shape your thoughts about cellphones in schools?



## Question #3

Now that we all have had a chance to share, where do you see common and/or conflicting threads?



## Exit Ticket

What is one thing you are taking away from this dialogue?  
What is One hope for the community?  
What do you wish policymakers would consider or understand better about the experiences, feelings, and values shared in your group today?

# 78 Exit Ticket Responses

## One Takeaway from the Dialogue

### Recognition of Complexity

Varying perspectives within each group

Phone is used both as a tool for **connection** AND **distraction**

Students need to be taught **Self Regulation** Skills

Students need to be **Accountable for their actions**



## One Hope for the Community

**Age Appropriate Policy** applied to students  
“Stages and Ages”

Policy supports **social emotional** health

Policy considers **safety**

Policy is Consistently Enforced

Self Regulation improves

Responsible Use modeled

Help students be **more present** and less distracted

## Policy Makers to Consider

**Regulate NOT Ban Cell Phones**  
iPad/Computer distractions addressed in the classroom

Social Emotional Considerations

**Consistently Enforced** within each class & the whole school

Clear rules with consistent expectations and consequences

Self Regulation Skills need to be addressed

Data/**Research Informed**





# Our Findings Based on the Dialogue



1. **Limitations rather than outright bans**
2. **Different schools need different policies**
3. **Students need Education, Structure & Support** – not just rules
4. **Phones are critical for social connection, safety & communication**
5. **Clear community-wide policies are needed**

Newburyport High School

# **Cell Phone Policy Adjustment Recommendation**

**2025/2026 school year**



Andy Wulf, Principal

# Values Emerged from Dialogue

Age Appropriate Policy applied at the High School

## The Policy Supports...




- Relationship Building that supports classroom activities
- An educational approach to designing a cell phone policy
- Inclusivity for all members of the school community
- Accountability for our students



**2025/2026  
High School Cell  
Phone Policy  
Adjustment  
Recommendation**








**Cell Phones Allowed**

-  Before School
-  During Lunch
-  After School



**No Cell Phones Allowed**

-  Classrooms
-  Hallways
-  Library
-  Advisory
-  Clipper Block

## Policy

## Rationale

Students are allowed to access cell phones before school, after school, and during lunch only.	Streamlines where students are allowed to access phones.
At the first bell (and after lunch block) students will be instructed to shut off (power down) their cell phones and place them in their bags.	Addresses juvenile feel to holders (more so for upperclassmen). Passing time is phone-free.
The cafeteria during lunch time is the only location and time when students will be allowed access cell phones during the school day.  The school, in conjunction with our student council will offer activities that promote social engagement.	Supports student voice in the policy process. Promotes student ownership of their behavior around devices.
The school will continue to incorporate instruction around habits and self-regulation as it relates to cell phones and social media.	Formalizes instruction around technology use.

## ADDRESSING THE BEHAVIORS

### Consequence Cell Phone

#### 1st Offense

Teacher instructs student to put phone away plus documents it to administration.

#### 2nd Offense

Teacher corrects behavior plus documents it to administration. Student loses phone for school day and administrator notifies parent.

#### 3rd Offense

Parent meeting. Student participates in "Check-in, Check-out" for 2-weeks. Phone passed into admn. at the start of school and pick-up at the end.

#### Additional Offenses

Student will participate in afterschool program focused on regulation skills.

### Misuse of Technology During Class

#### 1st Offense

Warning from Teacher/Administrator. Asst. Principal notified.

#### 2nd Offense

Student referred to admn. Parent notified by administrator. Student serves detention.

#### 3rd Offense

Parent meeting. Student participates in afterschool program focused on building self-regulation skills.

### Other Actions

#### Continued Support

The school will continue to develop curriculum that promotes healthy habits. This also supports the Portrait of A Graduate.

Student Council, Peer Mentors, Class Officers will work collaboratively to promote non-technological engaging activities during the school lunches.

Shift social media communication from logistical to promotional.

The school will explore alternative communication methods.

# Policy Review Annually

Living Document that will be assessed at the end of each semester

With feedback from:

Students

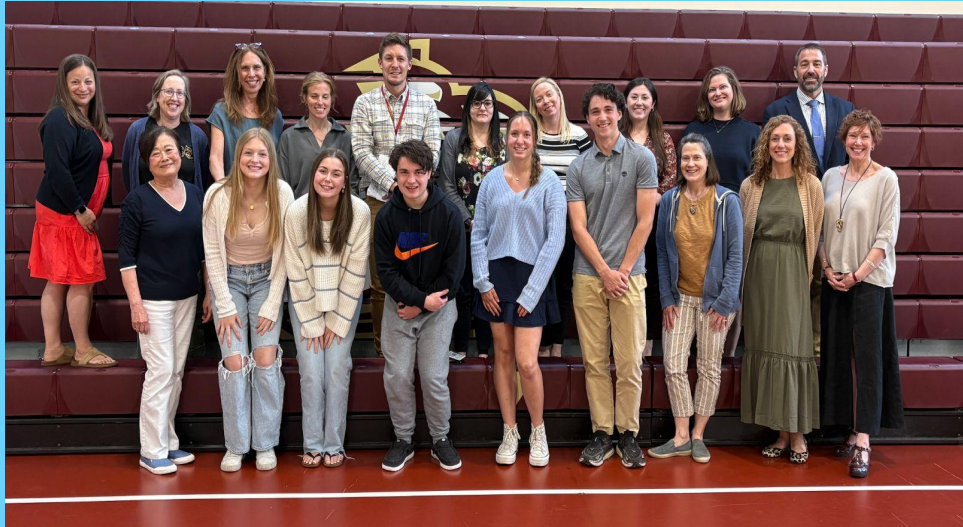
Staff

Administrators

Parents



## OUR COMMITTEE & FACILITATORS



Committee Members: Katie Suchecki (parent), Sarah Hall (parent & School Committee member), Caroline Jones (student), Lynne Cote (Librarian), Kristin Vicente (parent), Lucy Rimer (student), David Pearce (student), Eric Schildge (teacher), Tommy Rich (student), Kristin Prusinski (teacher), Isla Trail (student - not in photo)

# Thank you!



# Newburyport Public Schools

## Student Services Department year in review

June 2, 2025

Brad Brooks, Director of Student Support Services

Elise Comeau, Program Director of Academic Programs

Jeanna Guardino, Program Director of Social/Emotional  
Learning Programs

# Special Education Department Administrative Staffing

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- **Director of Student Support Services**
- **Special Education Program Directors (2)**
  - Elise Comeau and Jeanna Guardino (admins)
- **Team Facilitation Leaders (3)- one for each building**
  - Teacher contract
- **Administrative Assistant at Central Office**
- **Administrative Assistant in each building**

# Benefits of New Organizational Structure

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- TFL's are initial point of contact for special education liaisons. TFL's are peers.
- Program Coordinators/Director can support IEP teams when needed
  - A 'layered' approach to supporting teams
- No need for an out of district coordinator (shared amongst the 3 administrators)
- TFL's can complete practicum hours if they want to pursue administrative licensure

# Special Education Staffing

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- Special Education Teachers/liaisons
  - Instructional Assistants
- Speech/Language Pathologists: 9
- Occupational Therapists/COTA's: 4
- Physical Therapist-1
- BCBA's: 3
- School psychologists (3)
- Counselors: 12
- Contracted Service providers:
  - Assistive Technology
  - Teacher of the Visually Impaired
  - Teacher of the Deaf
  - Orientation and Mobility Specialist

# Role of the Special Education Department

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**Coordinate services that the district provides to students who require specialized instruction and/or support:**

- Specially Designed Instruction
- Guidance and Psychological Services
- Nursing Services
- Specialized Transportation
- Related Services (speech, OT, PT, interpreting, mobility, etc.)
- 504 Plans
- McKinney Vento
- Student hospitalizations

# Goals of our Special Education Programs

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- Keeping NPS students in Newburyport
- Maintain low number of students in Out Of District placements
- Provide high quality special education programs designed to meet the needs of our diverse and changing population
- Avoid using a 'one size fits all' approach when developing IEP's for our students
- Developing programs when needed to meet identified needs

# Specialized District Programs

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## Individual Development Center - IDC

- Students in the IDC Program may have cognitive disabilities, physical challenges, complex medical conditions or multiple disabilities.
- The IDC Program provides an integrated array of services as determined by individual student needs, including speech, OT, PT, etc. as necessary

# Specialized District Programs cont.

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## Strategies Based Instruction - SBI

- Students in the SBI Program may have disabilities in the areas of SLD, autism, communication or neurological
- SBI is an instructional model designed specifically for students who are identified with dual challenges of low average receptive and expressive language - oral and written language processing and expression and specific learning disabilities in reading – word reading accuracy and fluency, or dyslexia



# Specialized District Programs cont.

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## Language Based Classroom

Student has a specific learning disability in the area of reading (word attack, fluency, and/or dyslexia)

- Student must have a speech/language evaluation
- Student has average to above average thinking and reasoning skills
- Student has healthy social/emotional well-being
- Student requires significant assistance with written expression

# Specialized District Programs cont.

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## Therapeutic Programs - TLC

- Program is designed for students who are unable to attend classes in the mainstream due to anxiety, emotional/behavioral challenges
- Student has diagnosis of emotional disability or is described as an “at risk” student
- Student has average to above average thinking and reasoning skills
- The program is designed as self-contained with the intention for students to be included in the general population as they are ready

# Transitional Services

## Post Grad Program

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- Students who earn a certificate of attendance in lieu of a diploma or have deferred their diploma are eligible to move to the Post Grad Program until they turn age 22
- Services available for these students are functional academics, career planning, links to adult agencies, and vocational opportunities
- Program focus is individualized, based on the student's vision and their post-secondary goals

# Programming Needs / Things to Consider

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- Some of our students have 'low incidence' disabilities and do not have a large cohort of peers
  - Working with area districts to collaborate with them on programming
- The district does not have a designated program for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
  - Piloting a program this summer
  - Teaching Independence Direction Engagement and Social skills (TIDES)

# TIDES Program continued

- Utilizing existing FTE's, we created a classroom/program at the Nock and high school to support this cohort of students with ASD
- These students previously enrolled in existing district programs
- Instruction by special education and general education staff aim to ensure students build meaningful, transferable skills.

# TIDES continued

- Goal is to increase independence and engagement as students prepare for post-secondary life.
- Eligibility for TIDES is determined through the Special Education Team process.

The student profile is defined by a combination of the following strengths and challenges:

- An educational disability (e.g. Autism Level 1, Neurological)
- Significant interfering behaviors within the general education or community setting
- Requires direct, structured teaching
- Identified needs measured through assessments

# Year in Review Highlights

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- New administrative structure allows us to support teams and families
- New IEP implementation
- Developing consistent procedures across the department
  - Response to parent concerns
  - Reconvening of IEP teams for different purposes
  - Mediation as a resolution tool
  - Utilizing Extended Evaluations in certain circumstances
- Creation of a robust SEPAC
- Care Solace referral system

# Year in Review continued

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- Collaboration with neighboring districts on programming
  - Georgetown, Amesbury, Pentucket
- Working with these districts to share transportation costs for out of district placements
- Tuitioning in students from these districts
- Utilization of grants to support new IEP implementation and continued staff development



# Contact Us

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Gael Phillips - Administrative Assistant  
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(978) 465-4456

# Superintendent's Report



## Senior Class Clap-Out

We continued with a new senior tradition. In conjunction with the PTO and all building administrators, we held a senior parade through the Bresnahan, Molin and Nock schools. Seniors were bussed to each school and walked the building in their full graduation gear being cheered on by staff and students. Both staff and senior students were emotional as some of them have not seen each other since Kindergarten. This was a great event that connected our school community as everyone got to wish the 2025 graduating class good luck in their future endeavors!

### Senior Scholarship Night

The annual NHS Scholarship Award event was held on Wednesday evening. I was invited to say a few words, along with Mayor Reardon. As always, it was an honor to be part of this special event. Newburyport seniors received over approximately \$740K in scholarship donations this year including the recurring scholarships. Newburyport is so fortunate to have so many great opportunities for scholarships. These scholarship donors (including both families and community members) demonstrate a strong sense of community and are a great example for our young people. This was a great night!

### Senior Promenade

The Class of 2025 held their Senior Promenade on Thursday evening. This tradition involves the senior class dressing up in their prom regalia and being announced by name when they walk down the Morrill walkway in front of the high school. Parents / caregivers / friends and family members cheered on the senior class. This was a wonderful community event, and the students were truly appreciative of the efforts made for them by the advisors and building administration.

### STEM Showcase at Bresnahan

I attended the Bresnahan School's STEM showcase for grades 1-3 along with Mayor Reardon. Each class had an opportunity to rotate through different stations represented by various community STEM organizations and our high school top students representing subjects in chemistry, biology, anatomy physiology and environmental science. This was an impressive showcase highlighting our high school students' knowledge and talent in the science fields. In addition, the Bresnahan students had fun learning about STEM and viewed our high school students as role models. Great event for the entire school community.

### Ad-Hoc Superintendent Advisory Council Meeting

We held our final Superintendent Advisory Council meeting this month. The meeting agenda included a discussion on the final budget presentation that has been shared with the City Council. Some of the group members plan on attending the City Council Budget and Finance meeting to be held on June 5th. In addition, the group generated agenda topics for next year that they would like to see the district address. This advisory group has provided me with wonderful feedback on some key district presentations which has enhanced the communication with the school community.