



RUTHANNE FULLER– EX OFFICIO	
Newton School Committee Members	
WARD	
I	Rajeev Parlikar
II	Christopher Brezski
III	Anping Shen
IV	Tamika Olszewski- Chair
V	Emily Prenner
VI	Paul Levy
VII	Kathy Shields -Vice Chair
VIII	Cove Davis

NEWTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT Minutes

Date: December 18, 2023

Location: School Committee Meeting

Time: 6:30 pm The School Committee convened in rm. 210 at the Education Center 100 Walnut St and [via ZOOM](#)

Members: (I/R): Dr. Nolin (I), Parlikar (I), Brezski (I), Shen (I), Olszewski (I), Prenner (I), Levy (I), Shields (I), Davis (ab), Mayor (I)late

Students Remote (I/ R): NSHS: (), NNHS: Grace Currid (R)(left early)

Staff (I/R): Toby Romer (I) Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education; Ayesha Farag (ab), Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, Renee McCall (I), Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, Liam Hurley (I), Assistant Superintendent/Chief Financial, and Administrative Officer, Casey Ngo Miller (ab), Assistant Superintendent for Special Education/Student Services, Joany Santa (ab) Director Human Resources; Jill Grady (I) General Counsel; Steven Rattendi (I), Director of IT and Library Services; Dr. Katy Hogue (ab) Chief of Data and Research, Stephanie Gilman (R), Director of Planning, Project Management and Sustainability; Sean Mannion (ab), Director of Finance; Alyssa Baringer (ab), Senior Budget Analyst; Awino Odhiambo (ab), Budget Analyst Amy Mistrot (R), Director of Business Operations, Julie McDonough, Communications Director (ab), Kathy Lopes, (ab) DEI Director

Others (I/R):

Chair Olszewski convened a regular School Committee meeting at 6:35 pm and read a statement – which was received and placed on file and can be found [here](#).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- 1) Dan Evans – Negotiations – free the cash. Where is the money coming from to pay the attorneys.
- 2) Sue Cohen –124 Mt. Vernon St - Read statements from NTA staff: Stress, mental health, illness, fatigue, etc. Financial insecurity.
- 3) Alona Luecke – 663 E 7th St S. Boston– Computer analyst. Determined to work at NPS. Dream job – in the beginning. Covid affected all students and educators. Students now are needier than ever. Filling the gaps - comes at a price. Educators need support today.
- 4) Ryan Normandin- 4 Ayr Rd, Boston – SC has the ability to email everyone – Union does not. Offer is insulting, absurd. Claims the mediator agreed that the offer was insulting. Kids need the money now. Rhetoric – the SC doesn't care – base it on actions. The SC offer is not realistic. Everyone is suffering.
- 5) Ann Fagan -57 North Ave., Natick – Unit C HS students asked for respect and a fair contract. Their word so are the epitome of Newton's core values. Examples of curriculum and the growth of the students. 14 month process has eroded morale. Implore you be fair.
- 6) Julie McLaughlin – 56 Davis Ave. – parent – teachers not given a voice (during covid). Asked Mayor to provide funds. Now the mayor has come up the money. System squeezing. Glad that Dr. Nolin is here. Let's give the teachers a seat at the table.
- 7) Allie Franke – 21 Mosman St - parent – resolve to do better in 2024. Read areas that need improvement. Twin analogy, dig in heels, stubborn. Your commitment to this tactic is not working. Then read statements from other parents. Teachers deserve a decent salary. NPS.
- 8) Mike Zilles – 39 Nonantum St 27 yr /13 NTA President. Never been in negotiations like this. Conflict, disrespect. Most appalling, not just teachers, kids are being put in the way. 2 budget crisis' - during this time the Mayor is sitting on \$50m+ in free cash. NTA will not absorb the cost of inflation for NPS. You created two budget crisis'.

The Chair thanked everyone for their perspectives.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The Chair asked if anyone wanted to remove an item from the Consent Agenda which includes: 12-4-23 Regular Minutes, International Field Trip(s), Budget Guidelines and Grants/Donations which were received and placed on file.

The Chair then called for a vote on the consent agenda items:

1. 12-4-23 Meeting Minutes
2. International Field Trip (s)
3. Budget Guidelines
4. Grants/Donations

The Chair asked if anyone wanted

Motion: Levy 2nd: Prenner

Roll Call Vote

Ward 1	ab	Ward 4	Y	Ward 7	Y
Ward 2	Y	Ward 5	Y	Ward 8	ab
Ward 3	Y	Ward 6	Y	Mayor	Y

Motion passes y (yes) 0 (no) 0 (abstain) 2 (absent)

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE –

1. Dr. Nolin reported back to the Committee regarding information they had requested on 12-4-23, which was received and placed on file. These items included:
 - How we have weathered the Pandemic compared to other districts
 - NPS Budget over time
 - Student Services – Guidance/Psychologist/Social Workers – Caseloads and Industry Standards
 - Subgroup MCAS Comparisons
 - Human Resources
 - Staffing – Retention/Change/Churn
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
 - High School Subs and cancelled classes

Questions, answers and comments followed.

2. Superintendent Nolin's **Update** was received and placed on file. She reported on:
El Curriculum, Public Meetings regarding facilities, High School Student Led Cultural Days, Communications – Facebook; Instagram; Terrific Tuesdays; Wednesday Highlights and Staff Feature Friday, Portrait of a Graduate Timeline change, Sown to Grow (middle school social-emotional learning tool) and Signs of Suicide (SOS) screenings commencing in the schools.

Portrait of a Graduate Community meeting
NNHS January 17 6-8:30
NSHS January 18 6- 8:30

Questions, answers and comments followed.

Parent perspective –Sown to Grow prompts – good jumping off point.

BUSINESS AGENDA

1. Negotiations Update –

The Vice-Chair, Kathy Shields gave a brief negotiation update expanding on the statement and information the Chair provided earlier.

Question, answers and comments followed.

Heard from public – no district in the state would settle for the numbers NPS proposed- this statement is erroneous.

2. Policy JL Revision Recommendation -received and placed on file.

- Jill Murray Grady, NPS General Counsel presented a recommendation to add a section to this policy that will prohibit food delivery to students during school hours or on school grounds during school sponsored events.

Question, answers and comments followed.

NSHS has a table outside the entrance so delivery people don't go in.

Work on the back end of the policy –so as not to create additional issues – students meeting unknown people at an offsite.

3. Request for Five-Year Food Service Contract – received and placed on file

Amy Mistrot, Director of Business Operations is requesting the School Committee approve the district to advertise a 5-year contract (normally 3-years) as the district prepares its Request for Proposal (RFP). The 5-year contract will be designated as a first year award with additional years that will be awarded as amendments upon satisfactory performance.

Question, answers and comments followed.

- Is this the way the industry is moving – becoming more standard. 1 year contract optional 4 years Contract structure – current contract same?

A) Any contract for more than 3 years needs city council approval – but don't see a problem with approval.

Motion: Levy 2nd: Shen

Roll Call Vote

Ward 1	ab	Ward 4	Y	Ward 7	Y
Ward 2	Y	Ward 5	Y	Ward 8	ab
Ward 3	Y	Ward 6	Y	Mayor	Y

Motion passes 7 (yes) 0 (no) 0 (abstain) 2 (absent)

4. Grant – received and placed on file

Amy Mistrot and Dr. Nolin presented the following Grant for School Committee approval:

Dr. Nolin gave a brief overview and thanked Amy for her hard work on the task of grant writing.

Teacher Diversification Grant \$82,037

The Chair called for a roll call vote to accept the grant:

Motion: Shields 2nd: Brezski

Roll Call Vote

Ward 1	ab	Ward 4	Y	Ward 7	Y
Ward 2	Y	Ward 5	Y	Ward 8	ab
Ward 3	Y	Ward 6	Y	Mayor	Y

Motion passes 7 (yes) 0 (no) 0 (abstain) 2 (absent)

5. Budget Calendar Update – received and placed on file

Dr. Nolin and Liam Hurley presented an updated Budget timeline for NPS' FY25 Budget.

Additions

- Principals workshops – achievement trends
- In January – expression by the Mayor and City Council joint budget meetings
- Annual Report – will be the completed section one of the budget book
- Senior citizens reached out – genuine desire to know what is going on in the schools – desire for Q & A's

Question, answers and comments followed - Add a meeting or two – just in case they're needed.

6. Non-Aligned Salary Recommendation-received and place on file

Liam Hurley informed the Committee that normally, employees not covered under a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) would receive a salary increase in January, but because the district is engaged negotiations with all of its unions, it is recommended that no changes be made to these salaries until such contracts are fully executed.

Question, answers and comments followed.

Do these salaries align with the union COLA's

- These staff members do not have "steps" so their only increase each year is a COLA.
- Not fair to announce a percentage when we haven't finalized negotiations with the unions.

7. Use of \$6.2 million City of Newton Free Cash for Newton Public Schools – received and placed on file

The Chair thanked the Mayor for the additional funds and Dr. Nolin, Liam Hurley explained what this means to the district.

The money comes from certified free cash \$8.6m (\$2.4m has already been authorized for the NNHS synthetic turf)
Assistant Superintendent Hurley read the list of items this money will cover, freeing up NPS budget money.

Question, answers and comments followed.

Appreciation to Mayor Fuller for this money. Reiterate Madam Chair's comment – important for the quality of life for those in the building.

Sense of timing – when will this be deployed. Realize the benefits? Some of these will have a long lead time, and/or complexities.

Mayor

- Importance of the accessibility improvements.
- Appreciate this money. Ceiling was leaking badly after a storm – not on the list.
 - Part of routine maintenance
- Mayor Fuller – get questions about one-time funds – useful explanations about why there is surplus money. When this happens she is always in close contact with NPS. Free cash does require City Council approval. Will be brought to CC with some additional city needs. Overlay surplus weird confluence of circumstance – Eversource settlement. She is excited to be able to help our students and teachers with this money.

The Chair and Committee members took a few minutes to thank Kathy Shields (Ward 7) and Cove Davis (Ward 8) for their service as this is their last meeting.

The Chair announced that the Committee had concluded the posted business for tonight. The next meeting is January 8, 2023 at 6:30.

Adjourned at 8:20 pm

Lisa Mazzola

Date: 12/18/23

School Committee Secretary