



## NEWTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### RUTHANNE FULLER– EX OFFICIO

Newton School Committee Members

#### WARD

I	Rajeev Parlikar
II	Christopher Brezski- Chair
III	Anping Shen
IV	Tamika Olszewski
V	Emily Prenner -Vice Chair
VI	Paul Levy
VII	Amy Davenport
VIII	Barry Greenstein

## SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT Minutes

**Date:** February 1, 2024

**Location:** School Committee Meeting

**Time:** 6:30 pm The School Committee convened a Special Meeting via [ZOOM](#)

**Members: (I/R):** Dr. Nolin (R), Parlikar (R), Brezski (R), Shen (R), Olszewski (R), Prenner (R), Levy (R), Davenport (R), Greenstein (R), Mayor (R)

**Students Remote (I/ R):** NSHS: (), NNHS: ()

**Staff (I/R):** **Toby Romer (R)** Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education; **Ayesha Farag (R)**, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, **Renee McCall (ab)**, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, **Liam Hurley (ab)**, 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 (R)** General Counsel; **Steven Rattendi (R)**, Director of IT and Library Services; **Dr. Katy Hogue (ab)** Chief of Data and Research, **Stephanie Gilman (ab)**, 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 (ab)**, Director of Business Operations, **Julie McDonough (R)**, Communications Director, **Kathy Lopes (ab)**, DEI Director

**Others (I/R):** Kathy Shields (R) Liz Valerio (R)

Vice-Chair Emily Prenner convened a Special School Committee meeting at 6:10 pm, welcomed everyone and stated that as a special meeting there will be no Public Comment. She then asked Dr. Nolin to present the

### BUSINESS AGENDA

#### 1. Discussion and Vote – Calendar adjustment to determine make-up days for NTA strike

Dr. Nolin gave an overview of the decision before the Committee regarding making up the days lost to the strike. She has a recommendation, but wants to hear from the members.

Questions, answers and discussion followed including:

- Graduation date – NO
- attendance policy – Dr. Nolin explained the policy.
- After school care – They are open when school is open
- Up to 13 days and counting –It looks like we have no option to assume that Feb break goes away.
- Focus on the February break as the make-up time
- Combination of options – but depends on how long it goes
- What if staff have plans during the breaks
- It sounds like no one is considering Saturdays – would not favor of Saturdays
- These are recommendations open for discussion
- Disagree with the number of options we have – more than 2 weeks to make up and need a buffer for bad weather. We don't have a choice – start with Feb break and then April break
- Clock is running out on the potential to use February. The sooner we can let them know the better. Comfortable signing off on that portion of the solution right now and see what happens down the road. Clarify if we are voting on this tonight or not. Weekends – agree they would be detrimental to mental health but also needed for religious observances.
- Vice – Chair was going to suggest that we do just that.
- Dr. Nolin acknowledged the religious implications – she also contacted the catholic churches and there are masses every 2 hours on Good Friday. This could be an option to use as a half day (which would count as a whole day)
- Should we look at crafting an authorization in the broadest terms as we are hopefully nearing the end of the strike i.e Supt Nolin has the option to make up necessary school day during February

- Can we make this decision if there is no agreement
- Vice Chair– clarify are we going to look at it as a recommendation or an authorization.
- Clarifying this does not include the Monday holidays in Feb and April
- This doesn't solve the problem – SC has to vote a change the calendar. If we are going to cancel Feb break we owe it to the families to let them know now.

Friendly amendment do we take 2 days in Feb and then use April as needed.

Mr. Levy stated he wants to leave the motion as written, because splitting it up doesn't seem to gain much

Mr. Levy made a motion to eliminate the school vacation days during February break, Feb 20-23, and to request the superintendent to make recommendations on further school day restorations as needed.

The vice Chair asked for a second  
Motion: Levy                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Olszewski

Discussion –

- Some families have international trips that can't change – how will the attendance policy affect them
- Vice – Chair read an answer from Dr. Nolin: We will not penalize students academically for absences on make-up days due to the HS attendance standard.

Discussion on Paul' s motion:

Think about students who rely on routines, we have to consider February break first.

Roll Call Vote

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

Motion passed: 8 (yes) 0 (no) 0 (abstain) 1 (absent)

- We should be clear for families that we have not voted on the last day of school that typically happens in April
- April break is still on the table.

Adjourned at 6:52 pm

Lisa Mazzola  
School Committee Secretary

Date: 2/1/24