Northbridge Public Schools
Northbridge School Committee

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Michael LeBrasseur, Chairperson, mlebrasseur@nps.org, Joseph Strazzulla, Vice-Chairperson,
Alicia Cannon, Brian Paulhus, Joe Richards

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DONNA A. CEDRONE

Northbridge Public Schools
School Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 22nd, 2018 7:00 PM
Northbridge High School Media Center

I. Call to Order (7:30)

II. Attendance

Alicia Cannon	Present
Mike LeBrasseur	Present
Brian Paulhus	Present
Joe Richards	Present
Joseph Strazzulla	Present

Also in attendance were Superintendent Catherine Stickney and Director of Business and Finance Melissa Walker

III. Public Comment

- Jill Redding, NTA President, approached the committee with a vote of no confidence for the Special Ed Director.
- Lisa Ferguson – Member of the Finance Committee- Hopes that if we vote for our budget on Tuesday and then meet with the finance committee on Wednesday that we would consider any recommendations that the finance committee has.
- Talia Berkowitz- parent of a Special Education student- Concerns for the Special Education process at Northbridge- Child that needed services and she had to fight for them-
- Eleni Braley- Parent of two children with disabilities- had to fight for services and the process was not easy- Not receiving proper services for her child
- Jill Meagher- Parent of a Special Education student- Concerns with the Special Education department- Serious concerns on how parents and children are treated. Unable to get services, keeps getting pushed off.
- Maryanne Swartz- Parent of two kids at NPS- Struggled to get services and needs for her children.
- Jill Redding- Parent of a Special Education student- Had to fight for services and child had to change classrooms, causing many issues- District needs to look at the Special Education department.

- Meaghan Boermeester- stated that the Title 1 teachers are necessary for students and larger class sizes would make it too difficult for students.
- Eleni Braley- Small group of parents representing the parents of the Spec Ed system in our district. States that NPS is non-compliant.

IV. Superintendent's Report

Although we had weather challenges during the month of March, we have been very busy focusing on school safety, kindness, and academics.

NHS

Our form of ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) Training was presented/reviewed to all teachers by SRO DeJordy. This training was aimed at providing preparation and a plan for individuals and organizations on how to more proactively handle the threat of an aggressive intruder or active shooter event.

150 NHS students participated in a memorial for the 17 victims in FL on National School Walkout Day on March 14. A letter detailing events and expectations was sent electronically to all parents and students.

For the first time, Black History Month was observed at NHS this year. The culmination of this celebration was the Black History Museum held on February 15 in the field house. Approximately 150 members of the junior class created exhibits highlighting people and events surrounding African-American history and culture. The Worcester Telegram did an extensive article on the event.

Approximately 75 people attended a fundraising dinner in our Field House on Friday, February 23 sponsored by our NASA program. Astronaut Camarda attended and was the keynote speaker.

On March 1 the Annual Science Fair was presented in the field house, featuring projects of 175 students. Thirteen projects earned scores allowing them to move forward to the SWCL District Fair on March 14 at Grafton High School, beginning at 6:00 PM.

World Language Week took place from March 5 to 9, with students' projects highlighting various countries being presented in the foyer on March 7.

Advanced Placement Saturday study sessions commenced on March 3 and run through late April.

NHS junior Lauren Girouard participated in the MA Music Educators All-State Concert held at Symphony Hall in Boston on March 1st to 3. Lauren's audition score placed her as a top percussionist in the Commonwealth.

Student Council members attended the State Conference on Cape Cod from March 7 to 9.

DECA students attended their State Competition in Boston from March 8 to 10 with two of our students receiving a perfect score. They are preparing for the trip to Nationals.

Our boys and girls basketball teams and hockey team competed in district level playoffs. All teams had successful and exciting seasons.

NHS wrestling had three students finish in the top six at the district level, and sent one student as an alternate at the state level.

Adam Briand and Devon Foster participated in the MIAA State Championship for swimming at Boston University on February 18.

NMS

MS Staff and students have been actively working with SRO DeJordy to review and practice ALICE protocols and participated in a drill last week.

March 14- Class Officers from each grade created posters with messages of peace, unity, community and support for Stoneman Douglas HS on Monday and Tuesday. Posters were hung in the cafeteria. All students were encouraged to sign or write a message of support on the posters during lunch.

March 5 and 6- Ms. Hammond's and Mrs. Bethel's Grade 6 students participated in Town Hall style debates. One of the topics was, "Should middle school age students be allowed on social media?" Obviously, the debates were very lively. Students relied on their research and presentation skills for this activity.

Project Success is underway at NMS. During this afterschool time, Mr. Hoffman is working with students to review skills and participate in social activities.

March 15- NMS Athletic Booster Club sponsored the annual Dodgeball Tournament: All proceeds went to NMS Athletic Boosters to fund MS sports.

Balmer

Students participated in discussions on Riding the Wave of Kindness. Students viewed a video and then discussed different ways they can show kindness. Morning messages and announcements have focused on the theme of kindness.

With the help of our PTA, we were able to purchase two more chromebook carts! That brings them to a total of 8 carts! Students have been using the chromebooks for many classroom-based tasks, such as research and writing projects. It is exciting to watch all the amazing things they can do in Google Classroom!

Many teachers have also been using technology to keep parents informed of the many exciting things happening in class. Using platforms such as Shutterfly and SeeSaw allow teachers and students to post videos and pictures of their day.

The District Attorney's Office has been presenting information at each grade level about bullying. We are excited to have them visit our school to assist in educating our students on this very important topic!

Every year students participate in a Boys vs Girls Box Top Challenge. This year our students raised over $960 during this challenge. For the first time in five years the girls won the challenge. The winners will get to duct tape Mrs. Ross to a wall tomorrow! We will be taking pictures of this big event to share on Facebook!

NES

Staff at Northbridge Elementary School hosted a "kick-off" assembly on March 14 for students, promoting the Amazing Kindness Challenge. This activity was developed by a group of teachers to encourage students to conduct Random Acts of Kindness at school, home and within the community. There will be a culminating event on Saturday, April 7th from 9:00-12:00 where students can turn in their acts of kindness to the "Kindness Booth" and receive a kindness bracelet. Detailed information will be sent home to families at the end of the month.

Family Math Night was this evening. There were activities for all students preschool - grade 1, raffle baskets, and take-home math games. Thank you to Mrs. Healy, Mrs. Rossi, our instructional coach, and our high school student volunteers for supporting our students and families.

The Northbridge Council on Aging is a recipient of a local grant to share a visit from Davis Bates, who presents a session on Generations of Fun. Due to the weather, we are looking forward to his visit and a visit from our friends at the Northbridge Sr. Center in April.

As an effort to reach out to more families, Kindergarten Registration will take place on Wednesday, April 11 from 5:00-7:00 at Northbridge Elementary School. Parents should bring the child's original birth certificate, immunization records, and proof of residency at the time of registration.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

We are currently submitting the DSAC grant for $17K to provide a 3 day PD workshop for Special Education teachers at the end of June, as well as a full-day with Regular Education teachers and Instructional Assistants in August, on designing specialized instruction based on IEP goals, how to effectively service students in an inclusion model, and the roles of each teacher in this model. We are using Ribas Associates for this training.

We started our After School Workshop Series for our teachers to earn 10 - 15 PDPS. Courses being offered include: Co-Teaching for Differentiation; Writing in the K-1 classroom; Writing Strategies for 2 - 5; Supporting ESL students in the regular ed. Classroom: Social Emotional Learning in the Classroom; Dyslexia: Signs, Symptoms and Strategies; and, Integrating Technology in the Classroom Using Free Web Tools.

We have begun looking at the proposed SS standards changes and have met as focus groups and had great input and feedback from teachers at all schools/levels. We have applied for a grant through DESE to fund the creation of a Curriculum Council to address the implementation of these new standards, and to plan PD time for curriculum revision for all levels once they are approved at the end of this year.

We are conducting a Write 4 Success competition at the middle school to help students in ELA at all grade levels better prepare to answer the open response/constructed response questions on MCAS. We are also implementing an MCAS Crunch workshop model at the high school in the grade 10 ELA courses to help our students better prepare for the ELA MCAS by providing them with testing skills and strategies and re-teaching the standards that most often appear on the MCAS exam, historically, as well as reinforcing their writing skills.

We encourage families to follow the district on social media and check the website and electronic backpacks regular for information and updates.

V. Consent agenda

a. School Committee Minutes from February 27, 2018

A motion was made by Joseph Strazzulla to accept the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Joe Richards. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Alicia Cannon	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Joe Richards	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.

VI. Action items:

a. Donation of Chromebooks for Personal Finance Class

A motion was made by Joseph Strazzulla to accept the Donation of Chromebooks for Personal Finance Class. The motion was seconded by Joe Richards. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Alicia Cannon	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Joe Richards	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.

b. NHS Program of Studies 2018-2019

A motion was made by Joseph Strazzulla to approve the NHS Program of Studies 2018-2019. The motion was seconded by Joe Richards. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Alicia Cannon	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Joe Richards	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.

c. Capital Plan

A motion was made by Alicia Cannon to approve the Capital Plan. The motion was seconded by Joe Richards. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Alicia Cannon	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Joe Richards	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.

VII. Discussion:

a. Field Trip Approval- NASA ICED to Kennedy Space Center/Cocoa Beach FL

James Gorman and Christine Cote presented the committee with a Field trip to the Kennedy Space Center in Florida for the ICED Epic Challenge.

b. FY19 Budget

The School Committee members shared their thoughts and concerns regarding the upcoming budget.

c. Transportation Contract Renewal

Melissa Walker stated that our contract is setup as a three year contract with a two year optional renewal. Based on surrounding school's daily bus rates, it is recommended that we exercise our option to renew.

d. School Committee Legal Counsel

Catherine Stickney stated that there is a letter from Deutsch Williams. This letter is informing the School Committee that your legal counsel business is being resolved and they are forming a new partnership as Valerio Dominello & Hillman, LLC. They have given you for your consideration the ability to follow our counsel.

e. Snow Days and Time on Learning

Catherine Stickney stated that she has received many inquiries regarding our District plans of what we would do if we had to open school buildings on June 25th. Due to our missing out on the storm today, we are recommending that our last day of school be June 22nd, a half day. If indeed we have another inclement weather event that we miss another entire day of school, we have been offered many suggestions from teachers and staff. Cathy's recommendation if we have another day, is to consider looking at May 23rd and June 22nd and establishing them as full days verses early release days.

f. School Building Committee Update

Joseph Strazzulla stated that we are in the process of the Construction Manager (CM) recommendation and selection. This will get us to the specific detailed design work that needs to be done to price out the project. We hope to make our submission date for May. The community forum was well attended at the Library was good. Our next forum #7 will take place at the Senior Center on 4/23.

VIII. School Committee Individual Comments:

- Brian Paulhus wanted to recognize the MS Booster club. Last week, he attended the dodgeball tournament and it was well run and was excellent. Thank you for your hard work.
- Alicia Cannon stated that she is really bothered by all of the comments that they heard tonight regarding Special Education Department.

- Joe Richards wanted to thank the public for coming out. The comments and feedback were great to hear. We meet every two weeks and there is always a public forum so come and share feedback as it helps us understand all positions.
- Joseph Strazzulla stated that he wanted to officially welcome Tim McCormack on board as the new NHS principal. Thankyou everyone for coming out and participation. It is an important part of the process.
- Michael LeBrasseur stated that we will need to have a conversation in regards to the feedback that we have heard this evening. Thank you to everyone that came. As much as the feedback is not always positive it is what it is and we need to hear it. So we appreciate you coming out to let us know. Feel free to come to any meeting and let us know what happening and how things are going. This is one of the ways for us to find out what is happening. Thank you to everyone that cam e out.

IX. Adjournment (8:40 P.M.)

The motion was made by Alicia Cannon to adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm. The motion was seconded Joseph Strazzulla. A vote was taken by roll call and the following votes were recorded:

Alicia Cannon	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Joe Richards	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.