



Northbridge Public Schools

Northbridge School Committee

87 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, Massachusetts 01588 (508) 234-8156 FAX (508) 234-8469 www.nps.org

Michael LeBrasseur, Chairperson, mlebrasseur@nps.org,
Brian Paulhus, Steven Falconer, Allan Richards, Kathryn Atchue

Northbridge Public Schools School Committee Meeting Tuesday, March 23, 2021 7:00PM

**Remote public attendance only via the Zoom Link in accordance with the Governor of
Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting
Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Statement regarding Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of
the Open Meeting Law
- III. Attendance

Michael LeBrasseur	Present
Steven Falconer	Present
Brian Paulhus	Present
Allan Richards	Present
Kathryn Atchue	Present

Also in attendance were Superintendent Amy McKinstry and Director of Business and Finance Melissa Walker

- IV. Statement of Audio and Video Recording
- V. Statement of Mission
- VI. Public Comment

Comments for this meeting may be emailed in advance of the 7:00 p.m. start time to school_committee@nps.org. All comments will be recorded in the record, and all attempts will be made to mention them live during the meeting. Any emails received during the meeting before the public comment period ends will also be attempted to be mentioned.

VII. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Amy McKinstry provided an update starting with the high school return to in person learning meeting that was held last Thursday virtually. They were able to review the expectations of returning to school in April with the parents. There is a freshman field day being held March 31st from 12:00-2:00pm for all freshman to attend including pizza and orientation events. The high school will be offering student or family tours March 24th and 31st and April 7th and the high school counselors will be hosting a post-secondary information night on April 1st at 7:00pm. The middle school intramurals and clubs are off to a great start and both the middle school and high school are planning their April vacation academies. Amy advised of the Skills for Success workshop for parents being held by the Title 1 Liaisons. At the April meeting, the principals will be providing an update on student academic progress and programs. Amy made note of a meeting for all superintendents with the commissioner that she attended where she learned that the SR3 grant would be 1.65 billion dollars and would go to school districts. They are still waiting for the grant reward to be received at this time but based on the calculations; we would receive 2.2 times what we received in SR2 funding. Amy also signed Northbridge Public Schools up for a summer learning grant that would provide a one week accelerated academy that would occur the week before school starts. This

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academy would be ELA, math, and science intensive for multiple grades.

VIII. Consent Agenda

A. School Committee Meeting Minutes from March 9, 2021

B. Warrant 41-38s \$362,911.39 March 18, 2021

A motion was made by Steven Falconer to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Allan Richards. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael LeBrasseur	Yes
Steven Falconer	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Allan Richards	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	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.

IX. Presentation

A. SPED PAC Update

Sara Guerra advised that SPEDPAC is still currently meeting and just within the past year has met 40 times with Greg Rosenthal, not including their 12 business meetings. This exceeds their requirement of 4 meetings and they have had a steady attendance of 15-20 people. In October they voted to record their meetings due to the remote format and give 5 business days for the public to reach out with any concerns before the video is posted to the website. MASSPAC allowed them to send one parent to the Federation for Children with Special Needs Voices of Community conference during the first week of March. Sara updated the Committee on the issues they have addressed at their meetings recently and solved, as well as provided an update on the recording of IEP meetings going forward. Sara advised that looking ahead, they would be discussing mental health support for students and staff, transitioning to full in-person schooling, COVID-19 compensatory services, and starting a support group for Fathers. In addition to that, she discussed the Tiered Focused Monitoring survey being sent out which is located on the NPS website currently.

B. Curriculum & Assessment Update

Jill Healy advised that teachers are currently preparing for benchmark assessments for the 3rd quarter to evaluate students regarding standards and skills, and report cards will be issued April 8th. They are currently half way through the March Madness after school workshop series which includes sessions on supporting ELL and Special Education students, co-teaching, and Google Classroom. There were 57 participants involved in this series. Jill took the time to recognize the hardworking staff members who participated in the standard based report card taskforce meeting. April 7th will be a full Professional Development day, with the morning session being for all staff to focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity training. The afternoon session will be for K-12 to continue diversity training on foreign language and how it changes over time. PreK -5 staff can choose 5 different breakout sessions. Jill advised that they are working to close the gap in reading and will be organizing a Professional Development for the ACRI participation to increase reading instruction for struggling readers.

X. Action Items (7:35)

A. FY22 Proposed Budget

A motion was made by Kathryn Atchue to approve the FY22 Budget. The motion was seconded by Steven Falconer. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael LeBrasseur	Yes
Steven Falconer	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Allan Richards	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	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.

There was discussion before the vote was taken. Michael LeBrasseur brought up concerns regarding the two principal models. The remaining School Committee members responded by voicing their original concerns about the model and how they support it at this time based on the information provided but if a conflict arises this could be revisited at a later date.

XI. Discussion

A. New NES Opening Plan Update

Amy McKinstry provided an update that they are working as a New NES core team and have been meeting every Thursday afternoon to put everything in place. There was a joint staff meeting with all of NES, Balmer, and the 5th grade staff held to allow them to start getting to know each other. They discussed how things would potentially go, staffing models, flexibility, and encouraged feedback and ideas moving forward. This meeting was set up as a question and answer session. They are working on tours for the building and creating a timeline for that. These tours will most likely not happen until July and they are working on live tours for the parents, community, and staff, as well as video tours. Amy advised that there will be 6 high school students starting internships and helping out in the elementary school and they are hoping to have more participate. There will be two full days of planning during April vacation where they will discuss student placement and scheduling and staffing models. Teachers will be involved in these meetings going forward. At the meeting next Thursday they will be discussing assessments.

B. Transition to In-Person Learning Plan Update

Amy McKinstry provided a presentation update of the transition to in-person learning plan. This presentation included the return to in-person learning dates for each grade level, including utilizing April vacation make discuss and make any necessary adjustments. She also included a chart that revealed how many students in each school open to go to school fully in-person, stay remote, or those who have not yet responded. 86% of students will be coming to school fully in-person, 12% will be staying remote, and 2% have not responded. Student Absences during fully in-person learning will only be excused if they have Covid related illness or are quarantined due to a related suspected illness. They will be permitted to participate remotely and the nurse will determine if it is Covid related and if they are permitted; Non-Covid related illnesses will not be eligible for remote. Quarantine that occurs after travel out of state will not be excused and there will be no remote participation offered. Amy reached out and received the commissioner's guidance on this. Amy went over the changes in criteria for transportation as well as the collection of devices and the process of returning those.

C. School Committee Self-Evaluation

Michael LeBrasseur wanted to check in with the committee to see if they would like to participate in the School Committee self-evaluation this year as it is a helpful tool for the next committee to utilize. Steven Falconer advised that he was in support of this. Michael advised he would put it together and hopes to have it ready for the second April meeting.

XII. Information

XIII. School Committee Individual Comments

XIV. Executive Session Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A Section 21 for the following purpose not returning to Open Session: Purpose (3) to Discuss Strategy with Respect

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to Collective Bargaining with Union Personnel, specifically NTA and AFSCME Local 1709, Unit A – Cafeteria

A motion was made by Allan Richards to move into Executive Session Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A Section 21 for the following purpose not returning to Open Session: Purpose (3) to Discuss Strategy with Respect to Collective Bargaining with Union Personnel, specifically NTA and AFSCME Local 1709, Unit A – Cafeteria The motion was seconded by Brian Paulhus. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael LeBrasseur	Yes
Steven Falconer	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Allan Richards	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	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.

XV. Adjournment (8:08)

Note: The listings 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. Also, the timeframe for each topic is a general guideline and may not be strictly adhered to.