



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, Joseph Strazzulla, Vice-Chairperson,
Michael Clements, Kate Tracy, Randi Zanca

Northbridge Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, March 22nd, 2016 7:00 PM Northbridge High School Media Center

I. Call to Order (7:00)

II. Attendance

Michael Clements	Absent
Mike LeBrasseur	Present
Joseph Strazzulla	Present
Kate Tracy	Present
Randi Zanca	Present

Also in attendance were Superintendent Catherine Stickney, Business Manager Melissa Walker, and Student Representative Connor Nowlan.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Statement of Audio and Video Recording

V. Statement of Mission

VI. Recognition

Lauren Girouard, a NHS Freshman, was recognized by Dr. Catherine Stickney and Mr. James Verdone. Lauren was recognized for a successful audition for the All Massachusetts Concert and achieving one of the top scores in the state for Band/Orchestra.

VII. Public Comment-

None

NORTHBRIDGE TOWN CLERK
DONALD A. O'CONNOR

16 APR 20 PM 1:45

RECEIVED

VIII. Superintendent's Report

Catherine Stickney stated that we have entered the spring stretch here at NPS. With eleven weeks left, students and staff are very busy.

Thank you to the many families that attended the Celebration of Learning on March 9th. We were so proud to showcase the work, projects, and talents of our students from grades K-12. Appreciation also goes out to our community partners and families who assisted us during the career fair.

Catherine started with NES news - Thanks to the Project Smile students from BVT for visiting grade 1 students last week and providing them with an engaging experience learning about oral hygiene.

Family Math night is Thursday 6:00PM at NES - We hope to see many of our families there!

We are still accepting registrations for kindergarten. Children must be 5 by September 1st to be eligible. Call the NES office at 508 234-6346

Balmer has been a very busy place! As part of our PBIS recognition system we have honored 70 second thru fourth grade students with the Paw Sox Incentive Award. To achieve these recognitions students need to have demonstrated our RAMS expectations and be role models in our community. On April 8th these students will be acknowledged during the Pawtucket Red Sox game. The staff is very proud of all our recipients.

Balmer School has been recognized by the DESE as an exemplar school for their implementation of PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports). Gardner and Leicester School Districts are scheduled to visit the Balmer Elementary School to learn about our PBIS system. The staff and students at Balmer have been working very hard to be recognized as an exemplar school for the implementation of PBIS.

Our third and fourth graders will be taking the ELA MCAS during the last week of March and first week of April. Students have been working hard, especially in the area of literary response. We are hoping this hard work pays off!

Northbridge Middle School hosted the ever popular Grade 8 Lip Sync event. Our talented students continued the tradition with an enjoyable evening of entertainment. We are looking forward to beginning a project with the Northbridge Senior Center to partner our Middle School Students and senior friends together during the school day.

The middle school is hosting a week of incentive raffles for PBIS in their building.

We are accepting applications for the Northbridge Career Academies. It has been exciting to receive applications as we begin connecting prospective students with advisors at NHS. Applications can be accessed through the front page of the district website.

A familiar face has joined the community of NMS. Dr. Nancy Spitulnik is back to provide assistance for the spring as we complete our educator evaluation cycle and work on our humanities program. We welcome her back!

Finally our NHS updates. Student Council represented NHS at the state Conference last weekend. Two DECA students received first place at the State competition where thirty-three schools participated. A Cappella performed at Epcot to a standing room only crowd. They participated in multiple workshops. NHS students placed 2nd and 3rd at the SWCL Science Fair. NHS celebrated the NFL 50th anniversary by receiving a golden football from Super Bowl champion, Phil Vandersea. NHS also held the football banquet to honor our State Championship Division 5 champions.

NHS was also very proud of faculty and student participation at the Celebration of Learning.

The new scheduling process for 2016-2017 utilizing the Advisory period is well underway, as Connor mentioned last meeting.

We were also so proud of our peer tutors and New Horizon students for Celebrating World Down Syndrome Day yesterday on March 21st. The students were featured on 5 for Good on channel five and the front page of the Telegram and Gazette this morning. We are also very proud of our cover girl, Natalie Lyons, whose inspiring story of health and fitness sponsored by UMass Medical School, here at NHS has been told in the 2015 Annual Report of Mass. Down Syndrome Congress. Her buddy and amazing friend, Morgan, is always by her side.

I attended a workshop with QCC to work with 6 other districts to discuss expanding our partnership, not only to continue dual enrollment opportunities, but to provide college credit opportunities in house prior to graduation. We will continue to see what additional opportunities we can bring for Northbridge students. As you entered this evening, we had our most recent list of college acceptances posted. Our students continue to strive and thrive!

As we have reached the first day of spring, I would guardedly say that we have now passed the snow day season. The current count keeps our last day of school at June 20th. We are looking forward to great work with our students for the next months.

*Michael Clements arrived at 7:12pm

IX. Consent agenda

- a. School Committee Regular Meeting Minutes from 7:00PM on March 8, 2016
- b. Warrant 36-36s 3/3/2016 \$212,162.42

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

Michael Clements	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes
Kate Tracy	Yes
Randi Zanca	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.

X. Action Items:

a. Overnight Field Trip Request

A motion was made by Kate Tracy to approve the Overnight Field Trip Request-NASA ICED class to Langley, Virginia. The motion was seconded by Joseph Strazzulla. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael Clements Yes

Mike LeBrasseur Yes

Joseph Strazzulla Yes

Kate Tracy Yes

Randi Zanca 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. MSBA Statements of Interest for NMS and NES

Having convened in an open meeting on March 22, 2016 the School Committee of Northbridge, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest dated March 08, 2016 for Northbridge Elementary School located at 30 Cross Street, Whitinsville, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future:

#5 replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related cost in a school facility,

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits Northbridge to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

A motion was made by Kate Tracy to authorize the School Committee Chair, Michael LeBrasseur to sign the statement of interest for Northbridge Elementary School as stated. The motion was seconded by Joseph Strazzulla. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael Clements	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes
Kate Tracy	Yes
Randi Zanca	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.

Having convened in an open meeting on March 22, 2016 the School Committee of Northbridge, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest dated March 08, 2016 for Northbridge Middle School located 171 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future:

#5 replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related cost in a school facility,

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits Northbridge to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

A motion was made by Kate Tracy to authorize the School Committee Chair, Michael LeBrasseur to sign the statement of interest for Northbridge Middle School as stated. The motion was seconded by Joseph Strazzulla. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael Clements	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes
Kate Tracy	Yes

Randi Zanca 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. Website Improvements- Virtual Schools

A motion was made by Joseph Strazzulla to authorize entering into a contract with virtual schools to upgrade the website at the cost of \$9,950.00 from contracted networking line in the technology section of the budget. The motion was seconded by Randi Zanca. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael Clements	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes
Kate Tracy	Yes
Randi Zanca	Yes
5 members having voted in the affirmative	
0 members having voted in the negative	
The motion was accepted with a roll call vote	

d. FY17 School Budget

A motion was made by Randi Zanca to approve the Superintendent's proposed FY 17 budget in the amount of \$26,396,360.00. The motion was seconded by Kate Tracy. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael Clements	Yes
Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
Joseph Strazzulla	Yes
Kate Tracy	Yes
Randi Zanca	Yes
5 members having voted in the affirmative	
0 members having voted in the negative	
The motion was accepted with a roll call vote	

XI. Presentation:

a. Springboard-Extended Learning Day programs

Catherine Stickney and Melissa Walker shared an Extended Care Presentation. They discussed the history and backgrounds of the programs, trends, a current program overview, profit/loss charts, proposal with prices, survey results, and hiring of NPS staff.

XII. Public Questions:

Talia Berkowitz- 590 Church Street

Talia stated that she teaches preschool at NES and runs the Before School Program. Talia stated that the BASE program started as a pilot in 2009. The program has grown in the last eight years and is a huge part of our community. Talia is concerned that by trying to increase preschool enrollment by bringing in an outside vendor for daycare it will take the community aspect out of our schools. Talia stated that preschool enrollment is not down in comparison to the number of classrooms and students we serve. Talia stated that we went from 4 teachers to 3 and she is unsure where we would put any more of these kids if we keep adding to the preschool classrooms. How can we continue to meet the needs of our kids in terms of basic logistics? Talia stated that she knows the program has room for improvement. They are looking for the opportunity to grow as one united program K-8 with one handbook. Many policies were put into place at NES, not by coordinators, and are adding to the deficits at NES. For example, they pay \$1.60 for breakfast and that comes out of the \$5.00 fee. This is in the handbook so they must continue to follow it. Springboard proposes increasing rates for parents, reducing wages and working in small groups rather than hiring 1:1 assistants. Talia believes these are things that they can provide as well given the opportunity. Talia asked for the chance to keep these programs running by the people that have already proven that they are invested in our students and community.

Lori Johnson- School Nurse

Lori stated that she wanted to clarify a few things. Any preschool student that stays for ECC during the Extended Day or during the school day, according to the Department of Public Health's website, cannot be serviced by the Northbridge School nurses. They will be taken care of by EEC and we are not licensed to service those children. Lori just wanted parents to be made aware of this.

Donna Morreale- NES Secretary and BASE Coordinator

Donna stated that she wanted to address a few issues. Primarily, Donna stated that the numbers that were shown this evening are somewhat skewed. The revolver account three years ago was \$86,000. The improvements that were made out of the program (the playground) are used by their

students about 20-30 minutes a day. The \$46,000 that came out of the NES revolver account was significant. Donna stated that they have to purchase snack through Aramark and this adds to the deficit. Donna also wanted to address the 1:1 issues. She stated that Springboard does not have to accept any of our students with Special Needs. They do not have to follow their IEP and they do not have to give them the services that we give them. We give them these services because we care about these kids. We have these special kids 6.5 hours a day. During that time we do everything that we possibly can to help these kids be successful. To then have them come to before or after school and not have that support will not help them become successful.

(Micheal LeBrasseur asked that this information be discussed so that the correct information is out there. Catherine Stickney asked Kim Jennings to speak).

Kim Jennings- Springboard

Kim stated that they do not exclude students with special needs. They need to know the need and the capacity of the students entering the program to ensure that the program can meet those needs. Kim stated at this point they do not know the landscape of those students. Certainly, there are some students that have additional needs that we will have to make modifications for. The Question has been asked do we provide 1:1 aides. The answer is no, we do not provide 1:1 aides in our programs. However, we modify our learning environments and what we do for these students. They have students of all varying needs in the programs. Kim stated that they absolutely do not exclude special needs students.

Pamela W. Brazauskas- BASE Program Coordinator

Pamela raised concerns in regards to the Explorer Program. There are 40 various activities at offered to all of the students at Balmer. This type of enrichment is not an extra fee, it is not an elective, and it is in the \$11.00 fee that the students pay. 39% of the enrollments are from students that were drawn in from the Balmer Community. That would make 179 participants in the Explorer programs to date. Pamela is concerned that she would need the DESE approval to continue the program. This program is non-profit, and its flourishing success has provided vital resources to the school such as the iPads and Chromebooks.

Jill Redding- 1791 Providence Road- Teacher, Parent, Union Rep

Jill Redding thanked Dr. Stickney for the presentation. However, she was disappointed that it came after such a scuttlebutt. Jill is also disappointed in the School Committee in the fact that they talk a lot together and work very closely with the School Committee and the Superintendent

and we talk a lot about transparency. Jill stated that she feels that she is missing something in regards to how this came in to light. It was brought to her attention that there was an action item for an after school program. Jill stated that she searched for the discussion that the School Committee had prior to the action item. (Jill was informed that it was two meetings prior by Michael LeBrasseur). Jill doesn't feel that the way this came about was transparent. Jill felt that key partners were left out such as parents, teachers, and staff. Jill had a few questions for the committee:

- How does the outside service meet all of the DESE requirements or do they not have to?
- Why do we not offer care until 6pm? Is there a reason?
- Have you sat down with BASE staff in regards to improvements and ask them to implement any? It did not ask if I used enrichment activities.
- The Preschool enrollment survey was vague. It did not tell us why we were filling it out.
- Were the parents of preschoolers who have families in our districts who send their preschoolers elsewhere pooled?
- Early Release- Has spoken to numerous parties in regards to this issue. Jill stated that she has brainstormed and came up with ideas and they never came into fruition.
- What part of the buildings will Springboard be utilizing? Teacher's classrooms?

Charlene Manning- 276 Kelly Road

Charlene has two kids in the school system. Her children have always attended the BASE programs. Charlene loves the programs. It helps her child make additional friends. She doesn't feel that she was informed enough about the changes. Charlene agrees with Mrs. Redding on the case of filling out the survey- did not know the implications of the survey.

Kathleen Lewinsky- 17 Birch Street

Kathleen stated that she has two kids attending the schools and both children have attended the after school programs. She feels that the programs are exemplar. Kathleen feels that this is a great problem as she can be at work and know that her children are being supported academically and socially. She is concerned that we may be losing an exemplar program in our community.

Kathleen also stated that she is an educator in Hopkinton. Springboard came to Hopkinton for a short period of time last year and left very suddenly. This concerns her as well.

Taryn Potter- 47 Swift Road

Taryn stated that she has two autistic boys in the school system. Taryn stated that the program is phenomenal. They love her boys, take care of them, and follow their IEP's. Taryn worries that

these needs won't be addressed in the same way if an outside company comes in. Taryn does not have to worry about her children while in the program. Taryn also stated that she does not feel that she was informed that this was going to happen.

Dennis Latour- 88 Linwood – Grandparent

Dennis stated that he came tonight to listen and it seems to be a great program. Dennis stated that he has seen the numbers and he realizes that it is good to look and see what is available. Dennis stated that it seems to him that with the great program that we have that we could expand it with the expertise right here in the community to collaborate with.

Eleni Braley- 944 Providence Road

Eleni stated that she has two kids in the schools with special needs. She has used the BASE program from time to time. Eleni's main concern is where parents of typical children will just go through the admission process and pay the price what is the process the parents with special needs need to go through so that they are told if their needs can be supported. What happens if they can't?

Heather Elster- Executive Director- Whitin Community Center

Heather stated one of the things that concern her is that she worked with the school system for some time. Heather stated that she is in no way saying that the BASE program should be replaced. However, if the School Committee does decide to look to outsource the program she asks that you look within the community. Heather stated that they were not approached to write a proposal nor were they were aware that a search was underway. Heather stated that they provide services to Douglas Public Schools. She stated that they have an ongoing partnership with NPS supporting our teams and taking care of some of our teacher's children.

Terri LaRoche- Cherubs Haven

Terri stated that this town is full of a lot of wonderful programs. Terri would have liked to see more collaboration in the future. There are already 3 or 4 wonderful preschools in Northbridge. Terri stated that she came to the meeting to see if there could be collaboration. She stated that she is hearing that our license capacity is 23. Terri sated that there is a lot more children out there that will need services.

Daravann Rith- 105 Heritage Drive

Daravann stated that he has two girls with special needs in the BASE program. He stated that his children are not very accepting with changes. Meeting new people makes them feel differently, not talk as much. They are secure with the teachers in the BASE program which makes us feel secure. They are improving every day in the program. Daravann suggested that we give the BASE program the ability to make improvements.

XIII. School Committee Individual Comments

Michael Clements- Thank you everyone for coming and sharing information

Joseph Strazzulla- Echoed what Mike Clements stated and also wanted to thank everyone involved in the celebration of learning, it does not disappoint. Make sure to go next year as he is sure it will be even bigger and better.

Kate Tracy- Echoed both Joe and Mike.

Michael LeBrasseur- Thank you for your input. We do value and appreciate your input. Mike wants to invite the State Legislatures to a future meeting in April. The committee agreed.

XIV. Adjournment

The motion was made by Kate Tracy to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm. The motion was seconded Michael Clements. A vote was taken by roll call and the following votes were recorded

Michael Clements	Yes
------------------	-----

Mike LeBrasseur	Yes
-----------------	-----

Joseph Strazzulla	Yes
-------------------	-----

Kate Tracy	Yes
------------	-----

Randi Zanca	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.