

## Superintendent's Coffee Minutes

February 12, 2021 – 8:00 am - 9:00 am

Dr. Hallett opened the meeting by welcoming all participants (there were approximately 15 individuals in attendance over the course of the hour).

- MCAS Update: Dr. Hallett described the new MCAS format for this year, with a shortened test for Grades 3 through 8. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has been clear that MCAS results will only be used for diagnostic purposes to see where students are this year. Districts will not be held accountable for results in any way. High school MCAS will happen in May with the plan for in-person administration.
- New Superintendent's Entry Plan: Dr. Hallett shared that she is part of the Massachusetts New Superintendent Induction Program for all new superintendents. She is assigned a coach who meets with her weekly for group and individual mentoring meetings, and over the course of the year there are content sessions for all new superintendents. Dr. Hallett explained new superintendents are expected to complete a year-long Entry Plan, which includes collecting data through interviews, focus groups, and district document review, to allow for a new leader to understand best where the district currently stands and where it could be poised to go. Dr. Hallett is still meeting with groups and collecting data, but there will be a report to the School Committee in May that provides insight into her findings about the district's strengths, challenges and needs going forward.
- COVID-19 Updates: Dr. Hallett shared that things were looking better now that COVID-19 numbers were down, and we had not been seeing many cases in the schools for several weeks. Teacher vaccinations are scheduled for Phase II Step 3, so everyone is hoping that this will happen as soon as possible. Dr. Hallett explained that teacher vaccinations will need to be planned accordingly to provide the least amount of disruption possible.
  - Question: when is it feasible to expect a full reopening?
  - Dr. Hallett – we hope to begin discussions after the February break to plan ahead for possibly adding more in-person learning in the schools; in the meantime, the district and NTA are following a Memorandum of Understanding that offers specific parameters that will have to be reviewed if any changes to the current learning model are requested.
  - Question: Based on communications that we've had with friends who are educators, it seems that there are many teachers who would like to be back in school; how can their voices be heard?
  - Dr. Hallett – these teachers should be sharing their feelings about returning with their colleagues, their union leadership, and with administration. It is important that they share their own concerns and opinions for consideration in reopening discussions.
  - Question: why are sports teams able to play when children are still in a hybrid model?
  - Dr. Hallett – sports operate differently; student athletes and their parents choose to participate in athletics. The NPS Athletic Department has been very careful around health and safety protocols for NPS student athletes as well as visiting team student athletes. Athletic teams can be considered a "pod", as they play and practice together

regularly; each team practices separately in different gyms (basketball) or at different times on the ice/in the pool.

- Question: are teachers being told to stay home and not travel, just as parents are?
- Dr. Hallett – absolutely! NPS staff are receiving the same plea as parents and families. The school nurses have sent out communications to families but also to staff members. It is our sincere hope to have minimal disruption with COVID numbers when we return from February break.
- Cohort Changes: Several individuals on the Zoom meeting were Spanish speakers, so Dr Hallett addressed their questions about Cohort changes in Spanish.
  - Question: is it possible to have my child attend Cohort A? He is currently in Cohort D.
  - Dr. Hallett – the most important thing to do is to make the request with your child’s principal so that you are placed on the list of Cohort change requests.
  - Question: my friend has a child who used to take the bus, but now he is not permitted to take the bus. Can you explain and perhaps help to allow him to take the bus?
  - Dr. Hallett shared great news – the Department of Education has lifted some of the restrictions for bus transportation based on multiple scientific studies around air flow in school buses. Nantucket will begin adjusting the bus numbers to reflect these new guidelines as early as the week after February break.
- Social/Emotional Support: one of the participants asked about partnerships with mental health organizations available on island, like Fairwinds. Dr. Hallett shared that she will be meeting with the interim director from Fairwinds to discuss how NPS and Fairwinds can build capacity and programming during this very difficult time, especially assistance with parenting through COVID.

Dr. Hallett thanked the participants for coming. One participant asked how she could communicate or offer support to the teachers; Dr. Hallett suggested that sending an email to the principals that could be shared with teachers, as this would be well received.

Next meeting date: April 6, 2021 5:30 pm