

Nantucket School Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2018

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2 Present Members: Zona Butler, Jennifer Iller, Tim Lepore, Melissa Murphy, Pauline Proch & Natalie Gammons
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4 The meeting was called to order by Chair, Melissa Murphy, at 6:00 PM in the Large Group Instruction room at NHS.
5 Mrs. Murphy. This motion was made by Tim Lepore, seconded by Jennifer Iller and approved by the Committee.
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7 **Comments from Public**

8 Mrs. Murphy asked for the Nantucket Elementary School Principal to address the committee with the update on the
9 new Safety and Security measures concerning drop off and pick up of students in the school. The previous School
10 Committee meeting had discussion concerning a way to determine and implement these procedures quickly. Mrs.
11 Kubisch, Principal and Ms. Lauren Murray, NES Teacher reviewed the very thorough and quickly adapted plan that
12 will roll out on the 23rd of April, the first day of return from Spring Break. Ms. Murray illustrated how input from
13 staff, the School Council and a survey sent to parents, helped to formulate this plan. The response was
14 overwhelmingly positive with only a handful of naysayers. Once established and protocols in place, NES distributed
15 the information by letter in English and Spanish, a PACE message, and a backpack flyer was given to every student
16 with the hope to make them aware and excited about the changes. Mrs. Kubisch and Ms. Murray assured everyone
17 the modifications are minimal because it would still allow for parents to bring their children into school (or pick them
18 up) and escort them to class, but only through the front door. The doors around the school would no longer be
19 accessible and parents/guardians would have to check in at the front office and receive a badge for every time they
20 choose to enter and escort. The Kindergarten door would remain available for entrance, but would only allow
21 students, not parent/guardians. Staff will be on hand at the doors, in the hallways and generally in more numbers
22 than before to help students find their classrooms and get there with ease. Mrs. Kubisch furthered this will be hard
23 for some families, but it will make the procedure more in alignment with the other schools and it will offer some
24 autonomy and independence for the students. She felt the fire drills and first responders' suggestions started to shape
25 the needs and demands to tighten up the security routines and she was also very happy to have this be strongly staff
26 driven. Superintendent Cozort supported the policy change and reminded about the vestibule and card entry systems
27 being installed in the front door area adding to the lobby safety. Mrs. Murphy was thankful and appreciative of the
28 process and the moving forward and asked to have the changes reviewed and reminded often as the plan is
29 implemented.
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31 Mrs. Murphy then asked the new Director of Community School to address the committee about the safety and
32 security procedures at NCS. Mrs. Tracy Roberts stated they have their own current protocols for Extended Day and
33 Enrichment classes and the EEC, but the policy needed a little 'tightening.' She recently redefined some spaces and
34 has a letter ready to go for families. She added that Extended Day Coordinator, Elyse Campbell uses the Remind
35 App for effective communications for the members of these programs and that it works well.
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37 **Presentations and discussions of interest to the Committee**

38 **Audit Report - Martin Anguelov, Director of Finance**

39 Director Martin Anguelov distributed three completed reports for June 30, 2017: the Student Lunch, the End of Year
40 Financials and the Student Activity Account. There was a single audit finding related to an income verification for
41 the Student Lunch Free and reduced qualifications and this finding was corrected and rectified. The reports were
42 preceded by an introductory review from the Department of Education acknowledging receipt inclusive of the one
43 finding (and correction) consistent with federal rules and regulations. Mr. Anguelov discussed how streamlined and
44 cohesive the process' have become for all schools, with extensive training and better practices in place and thanked
45 the Principals, the Administrative Assistants and ESPs involved for the good work being done. The auditors are
46 happy with the current procedures and how progress and process has dramatically increased in a very positive
47 direction. Mr. Anguelov also expressed gratitude to Glenn Field, former Director of Finance, for helping and
48 mentoring him along the way to learn the ins and outs with regard to the Chart of Accounts and MUNIS and the
49 compliancy necessary for the school and the Department of Education. There were some questions from the
50 committee about carrying large balances in some of the high school accounts and Mr. Anguelov reviewed how some
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53 of the larger clubs move funds over years for help with school trips, an example would be the Spanish Club, or for
54 help with scholarships for testing options as filler money for the void left behind by the now completed MIMSI grant.
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Drop Out Rate – Principal John Buckey, Assistant Principal Jennifer Psaradelis, NHS

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57 Principal Buckey shared the percentages for the 2016-2017 dropout rate and was happy to show the decrease from
58 2015 at 2.5% to 2016 at 1.4%. He felt this was clearly a positive change and added that knowing the “backstory” for
59 each student is key to the success for anyone considering dropping out of school. He added having Ms. Psaradelis
60 (coming from the Guidance department) has been extra helpful in understanding some of the behind the scenes of
61 student and family situations that might lead to dropping out. Using the Prevention Model as the motivation,
62 counselors talk to students and try to help with any external circumstances or reasons, learning disability, work need,
63 to create an individualized schedule that might work toward earning credits. The Educational Success Program has
64 been a very valuable option, run by Andrew Viselli, as well as APEX learning, Virtual School, and/or manipulated
65 schedules that run maybe part time in the classroom and part time outside. The menu of options promotes not all
66 students are best suited to traditional learning in the classroom for an entire day. Dropouts historically come from a
67 one size fits all package and our intention is to be creative to accommodate specific situations. Ms. Psaradelis also
68 noted that she is trying to lessen the school suspensions to keep students in-house. Wrapping up the numbers, Dr.
69 Buckey wanted to mention that not all data can be chased down, especially when students are coming in and out of
70 academic situations from other countries. Mrs. Butler asked if citizenship information can be given to the School
71 Committee with regard to this data. Mrs. Murphy asked how many credits are needed to graduate – the answer is 28,
72 with a GED equaling 26.5. Another question was whether or not these drop outs have any IEP’s or 504
73 accommodations. Mrs. Iller commented how glad she is that the school is making connections with these students
74 and Mrs. Proch mentioned a conversation she had with a young person who dropped out in 10th grade but has been
75 considering returning to school. Mrs. Brady, Director of Special Services also mentioned that services are always
76 available to these students, the door is always open.
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New Policy JICI – Possession or Use of Weapons

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79 Superintendent Cozort introduced a new policy and noted he found it interesting that this particular policy is not
80 found in too many other districts and was also not found in the MASC policy collection. He thought in today’s
81 culture and climate a policy on guns would be easily located and therefore felt it was important to add to our J
82 Policies for Students and in our A policies pertaining to all people entering the school district. He cited MGL
83 specifically and Chair Melissa Murphy wanted to ensure if students violate this policy a discipline action is in place,
84 which Superintendent Cozort affirmed, is definitely included. He will bring this Policy for a vote at the next
85 meeting.
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School Committee Self Evaluation – Chair Melissa Murphy

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88 Mrs. Murphy asked if there were any comments from committee members. She noted some different responses from
89 each and thanked everyone for their answers. This is a good way to have insight on how the board works effectively
90 as a committee and highlights areas that can show some improvement. She reviewed each section where the answers
91 were a 3 or 4 which was either ‘disagreeing’ with the statement or ‘not knowing.’ She admittedly put a 4 in the first
92 section for Governance regarding committee members taking part in educational workshops or conferences because
93 she felt she did not specifically know the answer regarding people’s attendance in these. Superintendent Cozort
94 encourages at least one member to take part in the National Conference every year and Mrs. Murphy reminded about
95 Professional Development money available for such things. She went through random selections of answers
96 addressing the Strategic Plan and cited while the current Plan is not completed and accessible, accomplishment of
97 this will organically guide much of the work the committee does. She mentioned that the committee as a whole is
98 cordial and respectful of each person’s role and responsibility and she appreciates the cohesiveness and the
99 opportunities to agree to disagree as full agreement is not the goal. Mrs. Butler stated that she feels a little stifled by
100 the Open Law Public Meeting regulations and would like to have more meaty debate type conversations and that
101 being televised she feels, forces their hands. She appreciates the Workshops feeling those offer more opportunity for
102 delicate conversations. Mrs. Iller reminded everyone the Evaluation was recently re-worked and could be again and

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Mrs. Butler thought adding a Comment or Summary section would be valuable. Mrs. Murphy mentioned creating a School Committee Handbook would be beneficial. Mr. Cozort responded that this had already been completed by Mrs. O'Connor and can be sent to everyone.

Committee discussion and votes to be taken

Vote to Approve School Choice Participation There was initially some confusion regarding the opting in or out of School Choice Participation but because we live on an island, but we cannot accept students from other districts simply because they cannot get to us on a daily basis. Therefore we choose not to participate. Tim Lepore made a motion, seconded by Pauline Proch, with none opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Establish & Authorize a Special Reserve Fund for Special Education at \$250,000 Mrs. Murphy read into the minutes, Tim Lepore made a motion, seconded by Zona Butler, the motion was approved.

“ON Motion, duly made and seconded, IT WAS VOTED: to accept the provisions of MGL Chapter 40, Section 13E, to create a reserve fund to pay for unanticipated or unbudgeted costs for special education, out-of-district tuition or transportation; and further, to appropriate Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) from the Fiscal Year 2019 School Budget to be placed in said special education reserve fund.”

Vote to Accept Donation from Poets Corner Press to Nantucket Community School for Early Childhood Programming/Summer Boost, \$100.00. Pauline Proch made a motion, seconded by Jennifer Iller, with none opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Accept Donation from Egan Maritime Institute to Cyrus Peirce Middle School Gift Account for Maritime Studies, \$20,001.75. Pauline Proch recused herself, Jennifer Iller made a motion, seconded by Zona Butler, with none opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve previously Amended Policies:

- JH – Student Absences & Excuses
- JHD – Exclusions & Exemptions from School Attendance
- JICH – Alcohol, Tobacco & Drug Use by Student Prohibited
- JLCA – Physical Examinations of Students
- JLD – Guidance Program

All policies were accepted through a motion made by Jennifer Iller, seconded by Pauline Proch, opposed by none, and the motions were all approved.

Vote to Approve the March 6, 2018, Meeting Minutes. Tim Lepore made a motion to approve, Jennifer Iller seconded, and the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve the March 20, 2018, Workshop Minutes. Jennifer Iller made a motion to approve, Pauline Proch seconded, and the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve the March 27, 2018, Workshop Minutes. Pauline Proch made a motion to approve, Jennifer Iller seconded, and the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve the March 27, 2018, Meeting Minutes. Pauline Proch made a motion to approve, Jennifer Iller seconded, and the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve the Transfers & Invoices None, previous approved at meeting on March 20, 2018

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Superintendent’s Report–W. Michael Cozort

Enrollment

Mr. Cozort reviewed the Enrollment for March with two students adding to a total of 1641. The Entries and Withdrawals are shown below and he commented on the sophomore class - a large number at 153 and a record for NHS. Zona Butler asked to see the monthly breakout of Entries and Withdrawals for the next enrollment figures. Mrs. Murphy noted the Strategic Plan will be interesting in how it evaluates the PreK programming and the continuation of growth and that the conversation for planning is fundamental to the much discussed Universal PreK. Superintendent Cozort reaffirmed how there is a lot of dialogue about the goal of universal PreK, starting 4 year olds at full time in the 2019-2020 school year. He illustrated this is predicated on the Central Office renovation because SPED and ELL would then move back to the Central Office. That move will make room in NES which will then free up space for the PreK. He is anticipating the approval of funding from the CapCom and is pushing hard to be able to make these moves. He cited the PreK numbers could serve as much as 75 students and impresses the earlier the school experience starts for students the easier their learning experience is throughout school.

The conversation moved to MCAS and the ebb and flow of students entering and exiting and how the district can help facilitate achievement in this area. Mrs. Iller stated it is hard for students, especially EL students, to enter and be expected to score well on standardized tests and that it makes no sense for DESE to have the expectation of solid scores. This impacts our overall scores and our level ratings. Superintendent Cozort reminded everyone that two years ago the high school Principal got dinged for waiving an EL student out of the MCAS test and the high school was penalized. The Superintendent appealed to DESE with no success. Mrs. Proch wished there was a way to advocate to the state for some kind of change and while the Superintendent exclaimed the state will not change, the Chair suggested that Nantucket as a district take a leadership role for addressing this issue at a higher level. From the audience, Director of EL, Kelly Cooney added that one of the problems the high school faces is only one test is given at this age and it is expected for graduation allowance, therefore, all students, no matter who you are, will be expected to sit for the MCAS exam. At the lower schools they don’t face this conundrum. Mrs. Murphy responded that some kind of reasonable entry time period should be allowed for these situations. Ms. Cooney replied the state is simply looking for baseline data, but the good news is thanks to the “Look Bill” established in 2017, the MCAS test will be offered in BiLanguage forms and this should be helpful.

On the Horizon

The next meeting will be April 24. 3rd Quarter Budget and the Marching Band (with Erik Wendelken) will be on for presentations. Veritas will possibly also present. Ms. Gammons was very happy to hear of the invite and reviewed there was the WalkOut Video, the DC March and more and Veritas would be excited to talk about their happenings. There was also discussion about the Organizational meeting as the School Committee will have two new members upon the eve tally for Elections.

Subcommittees & Acknowledgements

Sub-Committees:

Jenn Iller mentioned the Denmark students, seven students and three chaperones (who speak English very well) are visiting as part of an exchange program facilitated by high school Science teacher, Elissa Gilgen. She had participated in this exchange in her district in South Carolina. Dr. Buckey was enthusiastic and hopeful we could send some of our students next year to Denmark.

Mrs. Proch had a number of things she wished to mention: First, she wanted to remind about the upcoming Special Needs presentation and the specifics she had requested at an earlier meeting. Second, the Winter edition of the Nantucket Project was “jam packed”- Adam Foss sparked strong dialogues concerning race relations. This program was sponsored by Nantucket Education Trust and she and the Superintendent are working to have Mr. Foss present in his dynamic way, in school, to trigger good conversation and help students understand differences. Mrs. Proch thinks he will resonate with the students. Third, she participated in the EdCamp and felt the conversations were alive and helpful. She enjoyed the opportunities. Finally, she went to the Innovative Pathways presentation the other

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night and was happy to see roughly 30 families, a good cross representation, come to find out more information about this programming. This was put together by Directors of Curriculum & Assessment, Jean Witt and Michael Horton and also, Kelly Cooney. Mrs. Proch listed a few outside collaborators in attendance: Harbormaster, Coastguard Chief Master, Maritime teacher Amanda Bardsley, Madaket Marine, Nantucket Sailing

Superintendent Cozort wanted to share about his recent field trip to New York City with the Accidentals & Naturals and he commented of all the field trips he has participated in his 30+ years of education, this was one of the best! He was impressed at the enthusiasm of the students and chaperones and was thrilled with the places they went and the things they saw, and he gave a shout out to Ms. Psaradelis for her funny Improv contributions when the group was involved in some improve comedy workshops.

Finally, at the end of the meeting, as it was Chair Melissa Murphy's last meeting on the School Committee board, she thanked everyone for her opportunity to serve and stated it was an honor to be a part of something so important. She respects the dedication of all members, the civic process and how participation makes a difference in our schools. Superintendent Cozort presented Mrs. Murphy with roses and thanked her for all her years on the Board. Mrs. Proch remembered when she was working for NAN (Nantucket Aids Network) Mrs. Murphy was in high school – and even back then she was involved in the advocacy of students.

At 7:42 pm the School Committee adjourned on a motion made by Pauline Proch and seconded by Jennifer Iller, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Logan O'Connor
School Committee Clerk