

Nantucket School Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2018

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2 Present Members: Zona Butler, Jennifer Iller, Tim Lepore, Steve Sortevik & Natalie Gammons
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4 The meeting was called to order by Chair, Tim Lepore, at 6:00 PM in the Large Group Instruction room at NHS.
5 The Superintendent asked the Chairman if two upcoming field trips could be included in the votes to be taken, one
6 for the Boston Museum of Science overnight for Nantucket Intermediate School, and one for the Veritas NESPA
7 Awards for the Nantucket High School. A motion was made to approve the agenda with the change noted, by Steve
8 Sortevik, seconded by Jennifer Iller and was approved by the Committee.
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10 **Comments from Public**

11 Tracy Mailloux, CPS Science teacher asked about the Policy GBEBD and wanted to have some clarification on the
12 policy. The Chair asked her to wait until that item comes up further in the agenda.
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14 **Presentations and discussions of interest to the Committee**

15 **VERITAS – Principal John Buckey, Senior Students Natalie Gammons and Caroline Richards**

16 Dr. Buckey remarked how proud he is of the Veritas staff and described how the award winning student newspaper
17 took on substantial current events this year. In addition to doing an already fantastic job with the publication, they
18 organized a Walk-Out protest to coincide with the national walk-out for gun control and the Parkland shooting, and
19 they attended the march on Washington D.C. with thousands of other students this April 2018. Miss Richards
20 described the two events, thanked the Administration for their support and commented these occasions as, life
21 changing and empowering for teenagers. She mentioned that she was nervous about the DC protest, having been
22 warned about counter protestors, but she did not witness such a group. The speeches in Washington were powerful
23 and reinforced to the students how young people are the future and their voice makes a difference. Veritas made a
24 video of the hometown NHS walkout (they showed it to the School Committee) which comprised of snippets of
25 student speakers and the community and school staff who supported their efforts. Junior students Mookie Richards
26 & Henry Dupont were the videographers of the video. The School Committee was very impressed with the video
27 and also NCTV who reached out to Veritas about future videography opportunities. Superintendent Cozort asked the
28 two editors how does the conversation keep going, worrying this topic and attention to the issue will evaporate over
29 time. Miss Richards responded she hopes (and feels) the younger Veritas staff is and will continue to be, more civic
30 minded as a result of these events. She talked about turning 18 and being given the privilege to vote, emphasizing
31 the importance for new (teen) voters to ‘get out and vote’ to facilitate change. Mrs. Iller recognized Laurie Richards,
32 Veritas Advisor, and thanked her for her efforts to the club. Miss Gammons added that the whole team is hard
33 working and it is a group effort. Zona Butler reiterated how youth matters! One other highlight for the student run
34 newspaper the girls wanted to mention is the NESPA awards in Boston, where they were headed at the end of the
35 week. Miss Richards shared that Veritas has won many awards over the years and is hoping to win again. In talking
36 about the NESPA event, one of the highlights is the classroom forums held in the morning which offers good
37 reporting strategies and the opportunity to mingle with other districts.
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39 **Guidance Update - NHS Counselors Courtney Foster, Cathleen Lepore, & Anita Small**

40 The three high school guidance counselors distributed a handout that thoroughly reviewed the roles and
41 responsibilities and listed each, under the categories of Testing, College & Career, Academics, Social Emotional,
42 English Language Learners, and Other. While the list is comprehensive, they described their office as a revolving
43 door - the hub of the school and that they “triage” constantly. The focus of the department is often varies, based
44 upon the time of the year and they firmly stated their job is collaborative – to get results for each students is always a
45 collaborative effort. The School Committee asked many questions (prearranged by Mrs. Lepore to be pulled out of a
46 hat by each School Committee member) regarding financial aid, ELL students and immigration concerns, case load
47 numbers, connecting with hard to reach students, college and career help, their roles as testing coordinators, and
48 overall, simply how many times in a year do they see one student. The counselors wholly agreed they would like
49 more time with students and less time handling the adminstrivia. The School Committee thought and agreed aloud
50 that additional guidance personnel would be helpful and would align the student needs with Safety &
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Security and social and emotional issues not necessarily being met if the students do not get enough time on a one on one basis with their designated counselor. Mrs. Butler specifically stated she would like all students to see their counselor four times per year during their high school career.

Special Education Update – Director of Special Services, Michele Brady

Mrs. Brady offered a PowerPoint presentation and additional print materials that reviewed the percentages of students on IEP’s and 504 Accommodation Plans and pointed out the state has a higher average at 17% than Nantucket Public School at 14.2%. She provided a large amount of data in numbers and percentages and noted the district recognizes the importance of providing early intervention, supports, and the accommodations, to diverse groups who have a vast array of different service needs. We are an all-inclusive district and because we cannot send students to different towns for various learning options when required, we focus in our home district to maintain the best possible services in the least restrictive environment. Mrs. Brady discussed different ways of identifying learning issues and students who are not considered making progress. She noted it is interesting how the numbers can increase as the students age because it is not always easy to identify a disability at a young age and not until age three, can we truly begin to see some developmental needs, or lack thereof. Mrs. Brady next reviewed the type of disabilities in the district and broke down the numbers by school. She also discussed the differences between an IEP and a 504 plan and affirmed to the School Committee there are lots of evaluations being done throughout the year. Mrs. Iller asked how long the evaluation process is from the initial starting point. Mrs. Brady gave a window of 45 days and broke down some of the timeline details. She then shared numbers on the out of district placements, which has been fairly stable for 8 years. A question regarding cost for these placements disclosed the dollar amount varying from \$76,000 - \$200,000 depending on the needs of the child, how much time, where, and the commuting back and forth on and off island; each is a case by case basis.

Committee discussion and votes to be taken

Vote to Approve Field Trip to the Boston Museum of Science for the 4th grade, on May 17 & 18, 2018

Steve Sortevik made a motion, seconded by Jennifer Iller, with none opposed, the motion or the field trip was approved.

Vote to Approve Field Trip for NESPA at Boston University for *Veritas* of NHS, on May 3 & 4, 2018

Steve Sortevik made a motion, seconded by Jennifer Iller, with none opposed, the motion or the field trip was approved.

Vote to Approve Policy *GBEBD – Online Fundraising & Solicitations, “Crowdfunding”* Superintendent began that this policy was tabled because the Policy Committee felt more answers were needed from MASC before making a decision on the policy. Therefore, it would not be put forward for a vote. It was at this time that Mrs. Mailloux was able to ask how the Committee was looking at the policy. She feared it would take away some very important opportunities for teachers to obtain donations that will enhance their classrooms and she asked if this was to delineate a gift versus a grant. She described a grant application that she herself has put in, one that has very specific requirements and goes through review - a specific project must be cited, an affidavit must be signed, and donors choose to give to the said requests. She hoped this policy would not create more paperwork and more people to the review process, subsequently adding work for a teacher. Mrs. Butler responded the Policy sub-committee is still working out the ‘kinks’ but ultimately, the school is held responsible. Therefore, they need to be certain in their decision. She also reminded the Policy Committee does not always agree with MASC and it does not mean we will always vote a policy into our handbook.

Vote to Approve Policy *ILD – Student Submission to Educational Surveys & Research*

Steve Sortevik made a motion, seconded by Jennifer Iller, with none opposed, the motion to approve the policy went through.

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104 Vote to Approve Policy JICI – Possession or Use of Weapons This is a new policy to address concerns raised
105 regarding a safe school environment. This policy is, surprisingly, not part of MASC. The committee felt it was
106 important to add, but warranted further discussion of some of the sections. It was ultimately decided to remove the
107 highlighted section and approved as Policy ADB under foundational policies, and also as a cross reference with JICI.
108 A motion to approve this policy was made by Steven Sortevik, Jennifer Iller seconded, and the motion was approved.
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110 Vote to Approve the April 24, 2018, Workshop Minutes. Jennifer Iller made a motion to approve, Zona Butler
111 seconded, and the motion was approved.
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113 Vote to Approve the Transfers & Invoices Jennifer Iller made a motion to approve, Zona Butler seconded, and the
114 motion was approved.
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116 **Superintendent’s Report–W. Michael Cozort**

117 **Enrollment**

118 Mr. Cozort reviewed the Enrollment for April that shows a slight increase of two students. Mrs. Butler was thankful
119 to see the monthly comparisons for enrollment and withdrawal movement. Mr. Sortevik asked about trend
120 projections. Superintendent Cozort reviewed the last demographic study was done prior to the building of NIS. This
121 study does not always follow normal models for comparison, because much of our movement is economic driven.
122 Mr. Cozort shared he would bring back the 20 year comparison which is a good chart to review for trends.
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124 **On the Horizon**

125 The next meeting will be May 15. Superintendent Cozort says we are staying on track for our meetings and looked
126 over the next meeting items: Facilities Update, a vote to approve the new Teaching Assistant Collective Bargaining
127 Agreement, Draft Calendar for 2019-2020 and small changes to the approved 2018-2019 calendar, a presentation
128 from Michael Horton and his trip to NCTM Conference. Dr. Lepore asked to add to the agenda (due to being
129 approached by community members and Town Manager, Libby Gibson) the Recreational Marijuana discussion. Dr.
130 Lepore stated this is a monumental battle and he is not in favor of the legalization. He strongly believes this drug is
131 dangerous for our youth and a gateway to more powerful drugs. Superintendent Cozort also alerted everyone about
132 the Town sponsored Three Rotary(ies) discussion on May 17 and urged people to attend as it has implications for the
133 school. Facilities Director, Diane O’Neil said there is a follow up session in June if people cannot attend the first
134 one. Dr. Lepore feels the School Committee should have a response prepared. Mrs. Iller asked to add the Chinese
135 trip to the agenda, and thought perhaps the May 15 meeting would be a good time to do this.
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137 **Subcommittees & Acknowledgements**

138 Sub-Committees:

139 None

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141 Steve Sortevik wished to shout out regarding the CPS Band/Chorus Concert being delightful, the CPS School
142 Council being informative. He was looking forward to the NES/NIS Lip Sync and the Unified Arts Night coming up
143 on Tuesday.
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145 At 7:40 pm the School Committee adjourned on a motion made by Jennifer Iller and seconded by Steve Sortevik, and
146 unanimously approved.
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148 Respectfully submitted,
149 Logan O’Connor
150 School Committee Clerk