

**Nantucket School Committee**  
**Workshop Session/Meeting Minutes**  
**December 12, 2017**

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2 Present Members: Zona Butler, Jennifer Iller, Tim Lepore, Pauline Proch and the Administrative Team:  
3 W.Michael Cozort, Michael Horton, Jean Garen Witt, John Buckey, Peter Cohen, EveMarie McNeil, Kimberly  
4 Kubsich, Jennifer Psaradelis, Donna Johnson, & Nina Slade  
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6 The meeting was called to order in Regular Session by Vice Chair, Jennifer Iller, at 4:30 PM in the District  
7 Conference Room in NES. Mrs. Iller asked to approve the agenda, moving to a Workshop Session for Review and  
8 Analysis of the MCAS Result, Tim Lepore made the motion, and Zona Butler seconded, and the motion was  
9 approved.  
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11 **Presentation and discussion of interest to the Committee**

12 **Review & Analysis of the MCAS Result by each School in the NPS district –**

13 Introduction – Superintendent, W. Michael Cozort

14 Superintendent Cozort reminded the School Committee many districts are frustrated with the State and all the  
15 changes of the standardized testing during the last few years with MCAS, PARCC, MCAS 2.0. It does not allow for  
16 schools to have comparable data and therefore the test results are not as useful to determine trends and, therefore,  
17 changes to the curriculum or instruction. He explained how the presentation would move forward, with each  
18 Principal giving information of how they are “diving into the data” of their schools’ MCAS results. He wanted each  
19 Principal to have the latitude to make their own unique presentation and, therefore, formats will differ. The  
20 Superintendent asked them to answer the following questions: 1) What data do you look at? 2) How do you look at  
21 data? 3) What does the data tell you about your school? 4) What are you doing or will you do to improve the student  
22 achievement data in your school? 5) How will you know if you have done that? He further explained that these  
23 presentations serve to follow up previous reports on MCAS results and stated that the ELL and Special Education  
24 data is rolled into each school’s presentation.  
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26 NES & NIS - Principal Kimberly Kubisch (NES) & Principal EveMarie McNeil (NIS)

27 Mrs. Kubisch began the elementary school portion by reminding the School Committee that the data was originally  
28 representative of NES, but that NES and NIS have now been split into two schools. With the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders  
29 in NIS, it will now be the task of NES to get them prepared for the MCAS with strong foundations in literacy and  
30 numeracy. She explained that she and Evemarie McNeil began by presenting the data to their respective faculties to  
31 review the data, determine the strengths and weaknesses of students and develop a plan for remediation of  
32 weaknesses. Together, they provided graphs showing how they triangulate data by comparing MCAS scores with  
33 other assessments such as AIMS Web and Fountas and Pinell. They took the School Committee through an “Item  
34 Analysis” of the English Language Arts (ELA) and Math data that showed students in all grades struggled with  
35 writing (specifically creating effective written responses to text-based questions) in both topic and idea development  
36 as well as the use of conventions (grammar, spelling, capitalization and punctuation). Our students need to better  
37 demonstrate higher order thinking skills. In Math, our students struggled with Geometry and Measurement, but did  
38 better in fractions than in past years. Once again, our students are still not consistently generating written responses  
39 to explain mathematical thinking or reading critically and responding thoroughly to problem solve.  
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41 In summation, they offered the following “Action Steps”:

- 42 1) More walkthroughs of classes by building administration with higher expectations for teachers through more  
43 effective and honest evaluations of staff, specific to knowledge of the curriculum standards;
- 44 2) Faculty meetings facilitated by building administrators and Directors of ELL and Special Education;
- 45 3) Focused Team Leader meetings to develop more consistency in the teaching of math and literacy, with  
46 particular attention to increased (daily) writing responding to text;
- 47 4) More EWD and Grade Level meeting time spent analyzing and responding to data;
- 48 5) Making a transition to Eureka Math, a more rigorous math program, with greater attention to pacing that will  
49 ensure all math subjects tested to be taught;
- 50 6) The creation of more effective benchmark assessments; and
- 51 7) Ensure the personnel resources to adequately support all of the efforts aforementioned

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What is the bottom line? Teachers knowing the standards and teaching to the standards, increasing the rigor and to have more critical thinking and less straight answers of who, what, where and when – let the students discover the answers in their learning. The School Committee had many questions: how are we grouping the students in ability, do they have an opportunity to stay with a teacher over a two year cycle so a teacher truly knows their student, do we track teachers to see who is doing well and who needs some support, is the test itself (on the computer or not) causing anxiety therefore skewing results? The Principals both addressed all the questions talking about how staff meetings, team meetings and faculty meetings are happening weekly, there are collaborative action plans, benchmarks set and reviewed, lessons plans created and reviewed to insure clear differentiation for all learners.

CPS – Principal Peter Cohen

Dr. Cohen and Donna Johnson, Assistant Principal, explained to the School Committee that while they were doing data diving, they determined they were not going to do data dive work for the teachers – they wanted the teachers (including ENCORE classes [PE, Music, Art]) to do their own investigations and determine where the improvements need to be made. Dr. Cohen said the most important piece of the puzzle is that teachers must know the standards in order to improve instruction and get better score results. Mrs. Johnson pointed out that ever since the Core Curriculum was rolled out by the state, it is very specific and not an easy task to identify and cover every area of the standards, inside and out. She shared it takes a lot of work and the teachers have to invest in that work to gain full command of the Core Curriculum.

Dr. Cohen shared a very comprehensive chart he created to track each student’s scoring for MCAS, PARCC, MAP and regular grades, that will help identify trends, patterns, and the strengths and weakness’ in CPS. He feels this chart will help show evidence of ‘if and how’ are efforts are working. The teachers and administrators are favorably using this chart and since it is shared as Google document, they can contribute information to track the students.

The CPS MCAS scores show that Mathematics scores, in particular, are lower at CPS than statewide, despite several attempts to improve the structure and personnel in that department across the grades. Reading is also an area that needs focus and test scores will benefit with emphasis placed on the ELA areas of instruction. Just as in the elementary grades, responding in writing to text is a school wide weakness. In general, all teachers must better understand the curriculum standards for which they are responsible and and adhere to instructional practices that address those standards.

Dr. Cohen then reviewed what CPS has implemented as changes in the schedule to respond to the data and accomplish positive results.

- 1) There is a new model of math intervention and math acceleration; as well as an emphasis in ESL for the language of mathematics;
- 2) There is a new model for literacy in the grade 6, providing two teaching/learning blocks to combine ELA and writing;
- 3) There is Curriculum Work going on during EWD;
- 4) There is an added Advisory section in the schedule, much like the high school;
- 5) There are more consistent walkthroughs with Administrators in collaboration with Directors of ELL and Special Education;
- 6) Focus on evaluation feedback, specific to knowledge of the standards;
- 7) There is a new “subject” in the schedule implemented called WinWin “What I Need, Who I Need.” This is a time two days a week developed to more specifically target students’ weak areas that need more time and attention.

In wrapping up, Dr. Cohen offered a snapshot slide of his previously presented School Improvement plan to show Long Term and Short Term Goals, and this updated plan adding a column to track a timeline of said goals.

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103 NHS – Principal John Buckey

104 Dr. John Buckey began by stating that he feels lucky that NHS opted out of the PARCC testing trial and continued  
105 with MCAS year to year as it has allowed them to have trend data for comparison of data and aggregate results. He  
106 broke down his data dive into ELA and Math and also into sub groups of SPED and EL students, offering green  
107 highlights for strengths and red highlights for areas of concern. Dr. Buckey also thanked his new Assistant Principal,  
108 Jennifer Psaradelis, who had previously been a Guidance Counselor and that she offers a lens which is helpful in  
109 offering perspective about individual students, their learning styles, who they are and where they come from.

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111 Dr. Buckey showed three graphs demonstrating the proficiency of this year’s class in English/Language Arts, Math  
112 and Science. He noted that the ELA scores are on a par with the state as are those in the area of science. Math  
113 scores, however, are below those in the state. Within those three subject areas, he noted areas of strength and areas  
114 that remain a challenge. In ELA, the performance of our students with Special Needs was strong, with higher passing  
115 rates in ELA, Math and Science than their peers across the state. However, our ELL students did not demonstrate  
116 proficiency levels in those three subjects equal to their peers in Massachusetts. He did note that our former ELs did  
117 score on a par, 91% Proficient or Advanced, which would indicate that these students can and will be successful  
118 when they can spend time in our school system.

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120 In enumerating existing and planned remediation efforts, Dr. Buckey suggested that most important is to examine the  
121 standards and align with curriculum. He followed up by offering the following:

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- 123 1) Walk throughs with the Directors of ELL and Special Education; and collaborating in faculty meetings  
124 with those Directors to better inform the staff of expectations for working with those populations;
  - 125 2) More EWD time to analyze the data and receive specific professional development;
  - 126 3) Consciously use MCAS released items in assessments and as activators;
  - 127 4) Observation and evaluation feedback that is more specific to the teacher’s knowledge of the curriculum  
128 standards for which they are responsible;
  - 129 5) An increased emphasis on reading, providing both more choice and more time to read;
  - 130 6) The realignment of the Math curriculum – Algebra I to Geometry to Algebra II is a positive step, as are  
131 the new hires in Math,
  - 132 7) The Summer Boost for Algebra program which provided supplemental math for almost 50 students;
  - 133 8) Greater attention to the needs of ELL students, particularly those who come to the high school without  
134 English proficiency. Kelly Cooney, Director of ELL, agreed that we are substantially higher in our ELL  
135 population than our comparison districts and the schooling these students have had (limited or  
136 interrupted) is a major factor in their success in our school system. We have a huge task and need to put  
137 several new programs (Newcomers, SLIFE, etc.) in place to support students who are not ready to be  
138 integrated immediately into mainstream courses because they have limited language skills, limited  
139 education overall, or may have any other learning issues.
  - 140 9) Re-working the schedule so that it can meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs  
141 as well as the ELL students. Dr. Buckey noted that this is very challenging in a small high school.
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143 In wrapping up the presentations, Superintendent Cozort affirmed that much work is being done behind the scenes  
144 that the School Committee and the public does not see. He acknowledged that he wished this presentation was done  
145 prior to the public meeting on MCAS results. He agreed we have areas that need work and he feels the needle will  
146 move and the results will follow. The Committee agreed this presentation was very informative. The information is  
147 hard understand without the underlying support data to clarify the overall progression.

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149 At 6:33pm the School Committee adjourned on a motion made by Tim Lepore and seconded by Pauline Proch, and  
150 unanimously approved.

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152 Respectfully submitted,  
153 Logan O’Connor, School Committee Clerk