

Nantucket School Committee
Meeting Minutes – Remote Participation via ZOOM and Youtube
April 7, 2020

Present Members: Chair Jennifer Iller, Vice Chair Timothy Lepore, Zona Tanner-Butler, Pauline Proch, and Steve Sortevik. Also present from the Studio, NCTV Representative Andrew Cromartie, IT facilitator and presenters as guests: Michele Brady Boebert, Director of SPED; Michael Horton, Director of Curriculum & Assessment, STEM; and Laura Steele, President of SNAC (all three presenting in this meeting) - Meeting is a Remote Participation Meeting via “ZOOM” in compliance with Governor Charles Baker’s mandate during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM, by Chair Jennifer Iller. Prior to approval of Agenda, the Chair read into the Minutes, scripted instructions for procedure of this meeting:

Read into the March 24 Meeting Minutes at the Start of the Meeting - Confirming Member Access:

This is Jennifer Iller, Chair of the Nantucket School Committee. Permit me to confirm that all members and persons anticipated on the agenda are present and can hear me. Members, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative: Tim Lepore, Vice Chair, Zona Butler, Secretary, Pauline Proch, Steve Sortevik

Staff, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative: Superintendent Michael Cozort; Deputy Superintendent Elizabeth Hallett; School Committee Clerk, Logan O’Connor; Director of Technology, Jennifer Erichsen

Good evening. This Open Meeting of Nantucket School Committee is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker’s Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the “COVID-19 Virus.” In order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, we have been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such, the Governor’s Order suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely.

The Order, which you can find posted with agenda materials for this meeting allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will feature public comment.

For this meeting, Nantucket School Committee is convening by video conference via Zoom App as posted on the Town’s Website identifying how the public may join.

For “Zoom” Meetings

Please note that this meeting is being recorded, and that all attendees are participating by video conference. Accordingly, please be aware that other folks may be able to see you, and to take care not to “screen share” your computer. Anything that you broadcast may be captured by the recording.

Meeting Materials

All supporting materials that have been provided members of this body are available on the Town’s website unless otherwise noted. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda unless I, Jennifer Iller, Chair notes otherwise.

Meeting Business Ground Rules

We are now turning to the first item on the agenda. Before we do so, permit me to cover some ground rules for effective and clear conduct of our business and to ensure accurate meeting minutes.

I the Chair, will introduce each speaker on the agenda. After they conclude their remarks, the Chair will go down the line of Members, inviting each by name to provide any comment, questions, or motions. Please hold until your name is called. Further,

- Please remember to mute your phone or computer when you are not speaking;***
- Please remember to speak clearly and in a way that helps generate accurate minutes***

For any response, please wait until the Chair yields the floor to you, and state your name before speaking. If members wish to engage in a conversation with other members, please do so through the Chair, taking care to identify yourself.

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Finally, each vote taken in this meeting will be conducted by roll call vote.

A request was made to approve the agenda. Pauline Proch made a motion to approve the agenda, it was seconded by Zona Butler and was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Comments from the Public

The Chair waited over two minutes with no person offering comment.

Presentations and Discussion of interest to the Committee

Special Needs Advisory Committee – Laura Steele, President

Director of Special Needs, Michele Boebert welcomed the President, Laura Steele, of Special Needs Advisory Council (SNAC) who shared a letter from herself and Co-Chair Susanne Fronzuto to the School Committee outlining the progress of SNAC's past year of accomplishments as well as a letter that they both wrote to Parents and Guardians about SNAC. SNAC is an "organized group to empower parents, school staff and community professionals to collaborate in a positive decision making process to plan and implement educational programs for students with special needs". Mrs. Steele said the group has grown, the slate of officers is healthy with each school represented by parents who can act as liaisons to offer resources and a connection for students with special needs. Mrs. Steele gave a review of their recent activities and shared a few specifics: the collaboration of many island groups at a recent Roundtable discussion pertaining to Summer Camps; a description of a day spent at our ACK Airport going through the motions of travel which presents challenges and issues for parents and students of special needs; and she reviewed organizing a community event with business to do an after-hours networking opportunity regarding employment for the older students as they age out of school. This segued into a program called NEXT (Nantucketers Empowering Xceptional Transitions), a new initiative to create a community and network 'space' for the older aged students still in need or peer connections, services, social interaction, etc... Mrs. Steele reinforced wanting the district families and community to know about SNAC as a resource. Her hope is that the schools can place the introductory letter in the welcome packets at the start of each academic year. She thanked the School Committee for the opportunity to address them and the public. Dr Lepore commented on how he liked the out of the box thinking regarding the airport mock travel opportunity. Pauline Proch asked if Mrs. Steele had any idea how the families are coping during the COVID-19 situation. Mrs. Steele responded that, in general, it is a struggle no matter what, and most likely more so now than the 'regular' day. The School Committee reinforced they are here to help and were appreciative of the way SNAC is communicating.

Student Support Services Update – Director of Special Needs, Dr. Michele Brady Boebert

Mrs. Boebert offered a PowerPoint to focus specifically on Student Support and not Special Education information that she would bring forward at a later date. She restated how Special Services are those provided by staff that are specialized in the areas of transportation, nursing, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, guidance counseling, social work services, behavioral consultation, individual counseling and social skills groups. She reviewed her job as the Director and gave the scope of her role. She broke down the numbers of the special education staff within each school and gave the number of students with disabilities in the entire district. Currently there are 291 students on IEP's and 109 students on 504 plans. Mrs. Boebert discussed the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) which is replacing RTI (Response to Intervention) and using this as the framework to outline how to help struggling learners, intervening, collecting data and utilizing an approach of prevention. She further detailed the separate departments and more of their specific involvement and daily tasks. She noted the nurse report that all nurses put out every month showing the total number of visits per school. The School Committee focused on her Guidance Counselor numbers and Dr. Lepore asked about the 860 guidance check-ins so far this year, wondering if that works out to 2.5 visits per student. He additionally wondered if these visits are merely college and career-focused or a carry over into other areas. He also queried the number of nurse visits, inquiring about how many were medical versus social-emotional. Mrs. Brady responded she would have to check those departments for a deeper breakdown of numbers to be able to answer those questions. Zona Butler also wanted to know about the Guidance numbers (an important component she has routinely pressed about for a number of years) and asked if every single student has been seen by a counselor, not just those who are focused on college and career. Mrs. Proch followed, wanting to know about the Special Needs students and parents and how we can help them socially, not just in the classroom. She was also curious about the current Seniors and how many of them have touched based with Guidance Counselors in general. Questions arose about how Guidance and Social work staff were reaching out now, during the COVID-19 pandemic, and how remote connections were working in this realm. Mrs. Brady responded

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the current issue of COVID-19 is offering a new set of challenges in providing services remotely and trying to balance the resources and therapies without overwhelming families. Steve Sortevis circled back to the college info and asked to have data regarding 63% being an accurate representation of college applications/acceptances and was this a low or high number. Mrs. Brady stated she would get the answers from Guidance. In closing, she summed up her report that Student Support Services addresses the needs of the whole child/every student to help them reach their potential.

District Report Card – Director of Curriculum & Assessment – STEM, Michael Horton

Mr. Michael Horton offered the District Report Card, now an annual submission from the Central Office. Superintendent Cozort created this document approximately six years ago as a stock report of data, adding additional details to support a lot of district information. The report is a collection of data in graphs, charts and narrative regarding student enrollment, teacher quality and education, assessment results of MCAS, and school and district accountability information. It represents data, much of which can be found on the Department of Education website, that has been shared throughout the school year with the Committee. Also included, but not part of the DESE statistics, are college acceptances, facilities, technology and athletics data. Mrs. Butler commented she loves this document with all the information in one place. Typically, this information becomes available around mid-February and, aligning to our Title I obligations, we are required to share this with families and community.

Update on Remote learning Plan – Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Elizabeth Hallett

Dr. Elizabeth Hallett reviewed the remote learning plan presented to the Staff on April 3 and the parents on April 6. She praised and thanked everyone involved in creating these plans and gave a brief overview of how they came to fruition. After extensive work behind the scenes with task forces and committees, a strategy evolved to provide remote learning due to our current COVID-19 crisis. The original intent of the remote learning plan (RLP) was to create the structure for optional work, which would eventually become required learning. The documents detailed the what and the how the educational plans would look and roll out. Dr. Hallett reviewed bullet points that were important and noted they were aligned with guidance from the DESE: learning is not necessarily only content; remote learning is self-directed; remote learning does not equate to online as it includes all kinds of menu options and actually limits screen time; assignments are weekly not daily; less is more; parents are not expected to take on the role of teachers; and grades will be Pass/Fail. Dr. Hallett supplemented some expectations and provisions for teachers and staff, Professional Development opportunities; stressed ELL and SPED must have requirements and supports that come specifically from DESE; and offered some additional resources for parents and emphasized school communications. She added that everyone should be patient, this is new and different, try to reflect and adjust and remember we are all in this together. She profusely thanked the Task Force for their tirelessness and positivity.

The School Committee all shared their appreciation for this work. Mrs. Butler stated she could not imagine these plans coming together so quickly and offered kudos to the staff. Dr. Lepore asked where we will be in September and speculated how this new online learning might morph into a fundamental change. He offered an example of Telemedicine at the hospital and asked Dr. Hallett her thoughts on this type of learning environment and its impact. Dr. Hallett stated she could not answer about September, but her feelings that nothing can substitute the connection between teachers/students, and how the in-person learning environment is still of the utmost importance. She does not foresee a sweeping change, but now that we are up and running, remote teaching/learning is a good tool to have, just not a replacement. Superintendent Cozort jumped in and described this as “building a plane in the air while still flying it.” He feels the value of the social emotional learning in schools is equal to that of academics and remote learning can be a supplement, but agreed, not a replacement. Interesting to add, he felt this has forced everyone to be better and broader in their ways of teaching and reaching children in yet another way. Mr. Cozort offered much credit to the Administrative team and the Technology department for addressing the many aspects required to make remote learning work.

Evaluation of the Superintendent – Mrs. Jennifer Iller, Chair

Jennifer Iller thanked Mrs. Proch and Mrs. Butler for putting together the final draft of the Superintendent’s Evaluation. As per last year’s request, the Superintendent’s Goals were included into the actual evaluation document prior to being delivered to the School Committee to help in their individual assessments. The collated document was presented by the Chair. Mrs. Iller reviewed each section/category and read the narrative of the summative report, including ratings and evaluator comments. Four categories breakdown the Evaluation: Instructional Leadership; Management and

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Operation; Family & Community Engagement; and Professional Culture. After reviewing the entire evaluation the Chair reminded the public that the Superintendent is the only Town/School Administrator who is evaluated in public. The Superintendent added he did not anticipate this year's out of the 'norm' experiences. He had planned for the year to be mainly focused on readying the incoming Superintendent, Elizabeth Hallett, and to ease her transition. Mr. Cozort quoted the Superintendent from Quincy Public School District (Dr. Hallett's previous district) when he had done a reference check, that she would be ready to take the lead and ready to take over in June 2020 and Mr. Cozort concurred, Dr. Hallett is prepared to take the helm. The Committee thanked the Superintendent for his work and dedication. Chair Jennifer Iller took this opportunity to welcome and confirm the contract for Dr. Elizabeth Hallett as Superintendent on July 1, 2020.

Committee discussion and votes to be taken

Vote to Determine School Choice Participation 2020-2021. Nantucket is an Island school therefore it is not a practical option. Pauline Proch made a motion to vote NO, seconded by Steve Sortevik, with none opposed, the motion was approved to NOT participate. This will be decision will be submitted into the Department of Education.

Vote to Approve Donations from Douglas Nigen Revocable Trust, \$500.00, Jason Olbres & Nichole Marks, \$100.00, Joseph & Marcia Aguiar, \$100.00 to Adopt a Lunch Tray Program. Pauline Proch made a motion, seconded by Steve Sortevik, with none opposed, the motion was approved.

Pauline Proch asked for more information on the numbers of students participating in the Breakfast and Lunch program provided by Food Services Director, Linda Peterson and Island Kitchen owner, Patrick Ridge. Superintendent Cozort said he would obtain that information and share with the School Committee.

Vote to Approve March 24, 2020 Meeting Minutes. Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the minutes, Tim Lepore seconded, and the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve March 10, 2020 Workshop Meeting Minutes. Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the minutes, Zona Butler seconded, and the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve the Transfers & Invoices

Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the transfers and invoices, Zona Butler seconded, the motion was approved.

Subcommittees & Acknowledgements

None

Other Comments

As requested prior to the start of this meeting, everyone in attendance was asked to CLAP in recognition of the First Responders as a way to say "Thank You" to everyone helping on the front lines during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At 7:35pm the School Committee adjourned on a motion made by Pauline Proch and seconded by Steve Sortevik and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Logan O'Connor, School Committee Clerk