

Nantucket School Committee
Workshop Minutes
September 3, 2019

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2 Present Members: Jennifer Iller (departure 5:32), Timothy Lepore, Zona Butler (arrival 5:30), Pauline Proch (arrival
3 4:07) Steve Sortevik, Superintendent Michael Cozort, and Deputy Superintendent, Elizabeth Hallett
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5 The workshop was called to order when a quorum was present, by Chair, Jennifer Iller at 4:05 PM in the Nantucket
6 High School LGI. Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the agenda with a modification adding an update of the
7 CPS Schedule, which was seconded by Tim Lepore, and the Committee approved unanimously. The Chair motioned
8 to move to a Workshop with the same persons approving.
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10 **Enrollment:**

11 Superintendent Michael Cozort offered the enrollment as of today, September 3, 2019. The count included only the
12 number of students actually in attendance, not taking into account any registrations or withdrawals that had not yet
13 gone through the system as of today. He reminded these numbers are always suspect, which is why we use the state
14 reported October 1 enrollment as our official numbers. He repeated to the School Committee to expect the numbers to
15 change, but also to recognize the highest count ever in NHS at close to 550, a high of approximately 400 students at
16 NES and CPS with the large incoming 6th grade and then the approximate 350 at NIS. Jennifer Iller mentioned she
17 was very pleased with the Chromebook registration attendance, and noted the many ELL families. Pauline Proch
18 asked if attendance at this registration is mandatory. Superintendent Cozort responded that while it is not mandatory to
19 attend, it is if you choose to receive a Chromebook. He thanked the Director of Technology, Jennifer Erichsen, for
20 offering these different opportunities for families to attend registrations (with two more in the future) and
21 communicated to the School Committee he will have Mrs. Erichsen report on how the roll out went overall.
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23 **School Committee Goals:**

24 Superintendent Cozort and Deputy Superintendent Hallett reiterated how they had determined the Goals, the strategy
25 and the order of the Goals by drafting Objectives, Indicators of Success and the Evidence. Leadership & Governance
26 as an underlying theme throughout the goals was slated as Number One, based upon MASC Field Director, James
27 Hardy's recommendations. While Dr. Lepore was in favor of shifting the order of the goals, bringing Student
28 Achievement first, the Committee overall agreed the current order should remain intact. They also agreed they like the
29 goals, but wanted to review a few areas. The Superintendent pointed out the biggest change would be the evidence
30 section in each goal and feels the Indicators of Success are more important than the Evidence as that drives
31 achievement. Mr. Sortevik said that he was partial to the listing of Evidence as it provided a checklist to see what they
32 have done or not done. The specific goals: Goal One, Section I, Evidence letter F regarding annual self-evaluations
33 and opening that opportunity to Administration and/or Community. There was considerable discussion about the
34 benefits (or not) regarding evaluations of the School Committee and the information they could glean from the results.
35 They were mixed as to the productivity of surveys outside of their own self-evaluation and were largely uncomfortable
36 with including this in the goal. It was agreed to limit Evidence F to just the self-evaluation. Discussion moved
37 forward to Goal One, Section II, Evidence letter A regarding School Committee attendance at school functions. All
38 School Committee members attempt to be present at school functions, as their schedules allow. Some members are
39 able to attend more than others and they often report their "Shout Outs" at the end of each School Committee meeting,
40 proud to share great moments of art shows, math nights, sporting events, band concerts, etc... There was conversation
41 and debate about how best to articulate and promote these events. Should they include them on the agenda, have a
42 "thank you" section in the meeting, and/or what is the best way to share the myriad of great things our students are
43 doing? Moving to Goal One, Section IV, the budget development, Mr. Cozort pointed out the importance of a
44 transparent budget process (which he feels Nantucket does) and how this is influential in what the district can provide
45 for students. He added it is always an easier year and process when the appropriation from the Town of Nantucket is
46 strong, because cutting, instead of adding, creates angst. He reminded the Committee of 2010 when cuts were
47 necessary to bring a balanced budget.
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49 Goal Two, Section V focuses on Safety. Mr. Sortevik was uncomfortable with one specific word, 'ensure', feeling the
50 Committee can commit, outline, and support the safety and security of the students, but ensuring is a much higher bar.

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Goal Three, Section 1, citing recruitment and and retention of staff, brought up the discussion of housing and assisting staff to stay on the island. Living on Nantucket and housing specifically, can definitely create challenges for maintaining quality staff. The rental and purchase climate on an island is a unique situation. The district does not offer contractual assistance for housing situations, but the Central Office does try to help with information on housing, when possible. The School Committee recognized the vast number of teachers and teaching assistants who have been able to secure housing due to Central Office’s inside knowledge, but felt more was needed to be done for the future. They talked about exploration of housing options and Mr. Sortevik mentioned the newly developing Richmond Properties off of Old South. It might be prudent to discuss a purchase or a lease option with RP with the school system being the owner or the tenant, understanding this might need to be included in negotiations, but it is worth the investigation of possibilities. The Superintendent agreed and described a new staff person earning the B-1 rate (\$62,143) on our Step & Column versus a veteran staff person earning M+45-10 (over \$110,000) is a vast difference. It was agreed the Committee would further explore the housing possibilities.

In conclusion Dr. Hallett added how she and the Superintendent reviewed the Department of Education’s District Indicators in helping to shape the School Committee’s Goals and felt that each goal was given equal weight. She added the District Improvement Plan goals fosters Student Achievement first and feels all the areas are covered alike. Mrs. Iller asked if anyone had any additional feedback or comments. Superintendent announced he would tweak the Goals to create another draft for presentation at the September 20 meeting.

CPS Handbook

The Superintendent reviewed the handbook with a small group of staff who appreciated the opportunity to offer feedback. With a new Principal at CPS this year, and an unfinished schedule requiring maximum focus, the handbook was a secondary priority. The three other schools had presented their handbooks already and the Superintendent stated the CPS Handbook will be presented at a future meeting.

CPS Schedule

Superintendent Cozort was dismayed to report that the CPS Schedule was delayed in its final design and was therefore, not ready for opening day. This was disappointing for Staff and Administration, but rather than dwelling on what caused the delay, he was complimentary on how hard everyone worked to formulate a first week plan, mitigate any issues for these first few days of school, and finalize a comprehensive and solid schedule for the year. He mentioned the new CPS Principal, Julie Lamoly and still somewhat new Assistant Principal, Jaime Bailey, coming into the year with so many things to address and not getting the opportunity to attend the Aspen workshops for schedule training/development (like the Principal of NHS John Buckey, and Assistant Principal Jennifer Psaradelis). The Superintendent feels the NHS model is a good one for CPS to follow and expects next year CPS will participate in Aspen training to help with the schedule design. He was clear in saying that this schedule concern must never happen again. He met with the NTA to share the rollout for the first days of school and was happy to report his walk through on the first day of school had rotations working and learning happening. Mrs. Iller recognized Mrs. Tracy Mailloux, Science Teacher in 6th Grade, sitting in on the Workshop and asked for her feedback of the first day and the schedule ‘plan’. Mrs. Mailloux responded the first day is always full of content and team building, with expectations and foundations important to the shaping of your classroom. She stated today was just like every other first day and we (staff) worked hard to make sure of this! Mr. Sortevik jumped in and stated he still has a major concern regarding math. He asked for clarification about how often students have Math in each grade, thinking aloud he felt it was one block per day which he does not feel is enough time. He has asked for another Math teacher for 8th grade. He illustrated how he sees the schedule working while integrating more Math among all three grades, recognizing there will be complications. Superintendent Cozort responded that it is not realistic to make changes now, but planning for changes for later in the year could be possible. Mr. Sortevik added the MCAS scores (soon to be available) will be a significant factor on where the district goes from here and we “need to see the changes.” This led to discussion about Advance Math options for middle schoolers, how they get into those classes and where they go forward.

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Concluding the workshop meeting, Zona Butler felt strange that the School Committee members are not part of the process of creating their own goals and asked if they are on the same page as other School Committees. Superintendent Cozort recapped that goals come out of what is reflected over the last two years – progression from the District Improvement Plan and actionable items to improve overall student success. Dr. Hallett talked about shaping the now outdated Strategic Plan into a more attainable and succinct plan, a three-year plan with actions defined for each year. This will take the kitchen sink of Goals and Objectives and create areas of focus driven by the data. Mrs. Butler commented this sounds like a fresh new approach.

At 5:43 pm the School Committee adjourned on a motion made by Steve Sortevik and seconded by Pauline Proch & Tim Lepore , and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Logan O’Connor
School Committee Clerk