

Nantucket School Committee
Meeting Minutes – Remote Participation via ZOOM and Youtube
November 3, 2020

Present Members: Chair Pauline Proch, Jennifer Iller, Zona Tanner-Butler, Dr. Timothy Lepore, and Steve Sortevik. Also present from the Studio, NCTV Representative Matt Nesslerodt and presenters as guests: Superintendent Elizabeth Hallett, Curriculum & Assessment Directors, Amanda Bardsley & Jennifer Rabold, and COVID Liaison, Sara Brooks - 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 Pauline Proch who followed with reading into the Minutes, scripted instructions for procedure of this meeting under COVID requirements:

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

This is Pauline Proch, 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: Jennifer Iller, Vice Chair, Zona Butler, Tim Lepore, Steve Sortevik, Secretary.

Staff, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative: 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 Webinar App as posted on the Town’s Website identifying how the public may join.

Each vote taken in this meeting will be conducted by roll call vote.

The Chair called the meeting to order. Secretary Steve Sortevik made a motion to make a permanent change for agenda(s), moving the Superintendent’s Report to the beginning of the meeting. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Steve Sortevik, seconded by Tim Lepore and was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Comments from the Public

None

Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Elizabeth Hallett had two main updates:

1) Monday and Tuesday, November 2 and 3, offered full Professional Development days for staff. All went very well, especially with a newly added segment dedicated to Educator Self Care. With focus on the social emotional health of our students, it is equally important to embrace the ‘whole educator’ just like the ‘whole child.’ Offered throughout the district were various activities such as: Yoga, Martial Arts, Disc Golf, Cooking, Biking, Puzzling, Coloring, and more.

2)Addressing some concerns: Health and Safety Protocols are being followed and they are working! Students have been terrific, following rules and teaching staff has been great enforcing the rules. As we are entering into the cold and flu season this will be significant. Dr. Hallett introduced the District COVID Liaison, Sara Brooks, RN, who had recently provided Q&A sessions to staff and was invited tonight to the School Committee meeting to share the procedures of medical review, contact tracing, and next steps for what happens in the event of COVID infection.

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Steve Sortevisk stated he feels as a district we have learned a lot about COVID-19 and we have seen many changes, but he is still worried, and one major area is the lunch times in all schools. Mr. Sortevisk feels these time are very dangerous due to microbes being able to spread airborne up to 20 feet. He is anxious of the possibility of an undetected case at lunch, where masks are off, leading to a problem and does not believe 6 feet provides enough barrier space. Dr. Hallett respectfully disagreed with him and responded we are abiding by the health guidance and metrics and 6 feet is considered the “Gold” standard for safe social distancing. Sara Brooks agreed with Dr. Hallett and with urging from the School Committee, went over the steps of what happens with a suspected case and the parameters of possible contagion:

More than 15 minutes cumulative, with or without a mask and under 6 feet is what can lead to possible infection. Remaining 6 feet apart as students have been doing in classrooms, hallways, and at lunch, is maintaining a healthy environment for our school district. If a person is in school and positive COVID results are possible, Mrs. Brooks will review schedules and seating charts, have conversations with teachers, counselors, Principals, and any other staff with potential contact to discuss specifics regarding the classroom that day - was there high risk behavior, how much time went by if there was indeed closer contact than 6 feet and she will have conversations about what is transpiring at that moment. If someone is identified as close contact, quarantining comes into the determination. Finally, no one is allowed back into school until they test negative. It is necessary to abide by HIPAA and FERPA laws of protection, and therefore, this practice must remain meticulously confidential to ensure proper protocols are being followed. Mrs. Brooks added, she speaks daily to the Superintendent, Department of Health Director, Roberto Santamaria and NCH’s contract tracing nurse, Mrs. Elizabeth Harris.

Mr. Sortevisk asked if we can reach out to all parents of students who had lunch with a child or is in a classroom, erring on the side of caution. Mrs. Brooks and Dr. Hallett again, referred to privacy laws, DESE mandates and reiterated no information can be shared - we follow state and contract tracer determination procedures and identifying individuals is a violation. Mr. Sortevisk, unconvinced at DESE being all-knowing in this situation, opined we should be thinking about ourselves and being more stringent. Dr. Lepore shared 6 feet is the accepted distance and feels 20 feet is overblown. Jennifer Iller said a conversation at the Policy Meeting has supported the Subcommittee’s desire to add into the School Handbooks stipulations regarding hand washing, most specifically at snack and lunch. Mrs. Brooks did not feel that hand washing could happen logistically all the time for all students, but wipes and sanitizer is readily available all over the district. Mrs. Iller furthered, cleaning workspaces prior to eating is a practice she would like encouraged with consistency. Miss Amanda Mack, School Council Representative said that while she leaves for lunch, she feels students and staff are definitely following all the guidelines and protocols and she personally, feels safe in school.

Future School Calendar 2021-2022, Draft

Superintendent Hallett introduced a draft calendar for 2021-2022. Although it seems difficult to presume about next year, she believes the district will return to a more standard 186 days. She does not think DESE will subscribe to additional PD days. She would like to maintain the typical PD Day in October to coincide with Columbus Day, hoping that the Cape Cod Collaborative will be able to function in person with their Specials/Encore PD as done in years’ past. This calendar draft has been sent to the NTA and the District Leadership Team for feedback. There was some minor discussion about breaks being the same or off weeks to other districts. There was some conversation about adding naming to Columbus Day, Indigenous People’s Day and there was a question about Juneteenth. Holidays on this school calendar follow federal holidays with one state holiday, Patriot’s Day, recognized.

MCAS

Superintendent Hallett gave an update on the status of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and what 2020 looks like for standardized testing. The Department of Education offered information that prescribes to how MCAS will be rolled out, who will have to participate and how it will impact the students for last Spring 2020 and this current academic year. The information largely impacts the high school years because nothing has been formally decided for grades 3-8. Last year’s 10th grade students had their Next Generation MCAS cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This included ELA, Math and Science/Technology. These same tests (with exception for Science, which has been suspended) for current 10th graders will be administered this year as follows: Computer based Legacy test will be optional in January/February and the paper based Legacy Test will be optional in May for the previous 10th graders (now current students in grades 11 & 12). Specific information based on student grade (10th, 11th, 12th) varies depending on whether students have graduated already without their passing MCAS scores, or if they previously did not participate, or if this will be the first time taking the test. There will be additional opportunities for some to retest as the year progresses and test

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formats and standards assessed will vary slightly. Testing schedules are subject to change, requirements for testing must follow health and safety protocols, and longer testing windows will be provided in order to accommodate testing all students. Mr. Sortevik shared a concern assuming we are still in a hybrid learning model, students have and will continue to miss so much academia, and wondered if the standards by which we test, will be modified. Dr. Lepore wanted to know why Science was dropped. Dr. Hallett shared her thoughts with the committee and believes adjustments and modifications will have to be made. Dr. Amanda Bardsley, C&A STEM Director, added the Science requirement is shifting due to the Common Core Standards changing which is why it will be removed as part of the requirements between 2020-2023. Pauline Proch asked about the English learners and accommodating their needs. Kelly Cooney, Director of EL feels they are on track and progressing normally, adding that ELs have an advantage of already doing many tests online, so this is not a new implementation of testing as far as their comfort levels.

Enrollment

Dr. Hallett offered Enrollment numbers for November, citing 1667 for the district total, and this is a bit lower than the previous month of 1673. These numbers appear to be in line with some of the homeschooling numbers and the possibility of some students moving out of the district.

Presentations and Discussion of interest to the Committee

Preliminary Budget Forecast FY22 – Director of Finance, Martin Anguelov

Mr. Anguelov presented preliminary budget projection numbers to approximate the cost of moving all current staff, programs and services into the next fiscal year. Currently, the FY21 Budget Appropriation is \$31,296,642. With payroll projected at an increase of \$789,696 and possible additional expenses of \$75,649, the projected total for FY22 stands at \$32,161,987. This represents a comparable budget increase, percentage wise a 2.8% increase is consistent with the last five years. Mr. Anguelov did caution it is difficult to anticipate PPE Supplies and any other unusual expenses due to the pandemic. Currently, we have been able to take advantage of two separate Grants to offset expenses due to COVID-19 but we cannot assume these Grants will be available as a repeated money train. Mr. Sortevik stated he is looking forward to hearing recommendations and needs/wants for staffing from each house budget.

MAP Testing Update – Directors of C&A, Amanda Bardsley & Jennifer Rabold

Amanda Bardsley & Jennifer Rabold presented the Objectives and the Why, MAP testing is beneficial to a district. MAP helps to drive data informed decision-making regarding curriculum and instruction and its effectiveness to student learning and achievement. The data will help educators identify strengths and weakness and localize gaps to differentiate instruction as needed. The most beneficial component to MAP testing is the immediate results and the opportunities to compare our district and individual students to national peer groups. MAP is especially beneficial this year because the pandemic has removed the opportunities for standardized testing of any kind for the past eight months. Not having assessments for such a pronounced amount of time has a direct effect on delivery of quality and meaningful instruction.

The two Directors reviewed how MAP, the District Improvement Plan and the School Improvement Plans all work cohesively and will contribute to Teachers Action Plans. Within these confines lies the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) that is created solely to work in our district with six key tenets:

- ✓ All students are capable of grade level learning with adequate support
- ✓ MTSS is rooted in proactivity and prevention
- ✓ The system utilized evidence-based practices
- ✓ Decisions and procedures are driven by school and student data
- ✓ The degree of support given to students is based on their individual needs
- ✓ Implementation occurs school-wide and requires stakeholder collaboration

MTSS is broken down into Tiers 1,2, & 3 – One, is general education and core instruction to meet the needs of all students, Two, is targeted interventions to help students who need some supplemental support help and Three, is intensive support such as IEP's or 504s and/or students who need more comprehensive one on one attention. The first two Tiers happen within the classroom, the third is often outside the classroom.

MAP testing is a computer adaptive test and as the students' progress through the assessment, questions become more

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challenging or easier depending on answering correctly or not. The score is prescribed to measure growth over time using an RIT scale to accurately measure what students know and tracks student progress across multiple years. Currently NPS is utilizing this assessment in grades K-9. Drs. Bardsley & Rabold offered examples of sample questions along with charts and graphics to illustrate grade reporting and explained the comparisons for students in our district versus students national scoring. Nantucket tested during the last week of October, and they cited School Committee some preliminary results. Jennifer Iller said she considers this type of testing a beneficial tool for both students and staff. The Committee was curious how often the district might be able to administer the MAP tests this year and Chair Pauline Proch wanted to know if this testing causes similar stress as she knows the MCAS can for some students. Dr. Bardsley stated MAP testing is shorter, usually 60 minutes or less, and CPS students in particular are so used to the test having taken it previously. As MAP is not considered a 'high stakes' test but rather a 'dipstick' measurement, we should ensure our students and families have that understanding.

Committee discussion and votes to be taken

Vote to Approve Donation from Ayesha Barber and Ali Mitchell, Nantucket Sewing to NPS, 110 Handsewn Facemasks
Jennifer Iller made a motion to approve the donation, Tim Lepore seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve Donation from Rotary Club and Sheriff Perelman, 250 Backpacks to CPS Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the donation, Jennifer Iller seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve NPS School Handbooks , with updates as requested: NES, NIS, CPS, NHS Jennifer Iller made a motion to approve the donation, Tim Lepore seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved

Vote to Approve October 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes Tim Lepore made a motion to approve the minutes, Steve Sortevik seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve October 22, 2020 Executive Meeting Minutes Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the minutes, Zona Butler seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve the Transfers & Invoices Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve, Tim Lepore seconded, the motion was approved.

Sub-Committee/Work Group

Policy: Jennifer Iller and Zona Butler reviewed the School Handbooks and now are going to meet next week to review the I & J Policies

Safety & Security: Meeting for the NHS is Wednesday, November 4,

Student Council Representative

Student Council Representative, Amanda Mack, stated Veritas, the NHS Newspaper has come out online, the first virtual edition. Seniors are working with AD Mr. Maury, NHS Principal Mandy Vasil and Student Council Advisor Seanda Bartlett to work on some type of Homecoming/Spirit week which will be different this year because of COVID-19. A Student Forum was provided by Mrs. Vasil to hear updates, suggestions and thoughts related to high school. The Student Council is working on a public service message to show at the Drive-In when the Drama Club does their first virtual performance live through movie option. Mrs. Butler asked about December Delight. Miss Mack said it might be all virtual, they are working on this major fundraiser with the Principal and Senior Class Advisor Paul Bucheri – Zoom could be the new rollout.

Steve Sortevik gave a nod to the Veritas and to the Athletics department. Mrs. Proch reminded the committee the next meeting will be on November 24, 2020 will be a Workshop at Noon. At 8:14pm the School Committee adjourned on a motion made by Steve Sortevik and seconded by Jennifer Iller, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Logan O'Connor, School Committee Clerk