

**Nantucket School Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes – Remote Participation via ZOOM and Youtube**  
**December 1, 2020**

Present Members: Chair Pauline Proch, Vice Chair Jennifer Iller, Zona Tanner-Butler (arrived 6:07), Dr. Timothy Lepore, and Steve Sortevik. Also present from the Studio, NCTV Representative Matt Pommerfret and presenters as guests: Superintendent Elizabeth Hallett, Principals Vasil, Horton, McNeil, & Kubisch, School Resource Officers Keith Mansfield & Cassandra Thompson, Community School Director, Tracy Roberts, Technology Director Jennifer Erichsen, Facilities Director Diane O’Neil, & Athletics Director Christopher Maury - 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 Butle (no response), 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. 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**

The Chair recognized Master Bobby Planzer who wanted to thank all the people involved helping with the response to the catastrophic house explosion that happened last week in the Woodbury Lane community. He was very concerned with the well being and safety of everyone and wanted to ensure the public announcement made by first responders was heard by the community.

**Superintendent’s Report**

Superintendent Elizabeth Hallett was pleased to open the meeting introducing Master Robert Gannon Mooney, a Senior in NPS and her selection as the winner of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) award. Master Mooney has distinguished himself by not only by a high academic achievement, but as a three-sport athlete and a participant in community service work with the Harvey Foundation. Each year, Superintendents have an opportunity to award a Senior(s) this prestigious award. Dr. Hallett determined that Master Mooney showed great resolve and perseverance by reaching his goals during times of adversity. This young man, joined on the Zoom broadcast by his Mother, Erika Mooney, was very appreciative to be the recipient. Principal of NHS Mandy Vasil agreed that he was well deserving.

**Enrollment**

Superintendent Hallett gave the enrollment update for the month of November, which represents student enrollment numbers as of December 1. The district is down three students with a total district number at 1,664. Dr. Hallett commented that this

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downward trend appears nationwide as many public-school districts are seeing the decrease, and we can attribute ours here to parental decisions of education – most likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Presentations and discussions of interest to the Committee**

**School Resource Officers Update – SROs Keith Mansfield and Cassandra Thompson**

Officer Thompson and Officer Mansfield began the presentation stating that no day is a ‘normal day’ and nothing is ever typical; she impressed that even though we are amidst the pandemic, she and her colleague still are performing similar routines as before. They both emphasized how much they love being inside the schools. The SROs offered a comparable presentation from last year outlining their day but talked about some of the nuanced changes due to COVID -19. Students coming in earlier in the morning allows for prime opportunities for interaction with students and the parents. Often in the morning the SROs are helping with traffic flow, but they make themselves as accessible as possible all day long. Officer Thompson is still teaching her criminal justice class, but for now, there are no fieldtrips. Many of the trainings and PD for lockdowns are now virtual, and connecting with students during the day is based on the Cohorts and hybrid remote learning. The focus is to keep things as ‘normal’ as possible. One area that has shown an uptick is the situation of truancy, and the SROs pinpoint the pandemic as the large contributor. The officers agree that knowing the students as well as they do helps them to know the story behind possible truancy issues; they can make house visits and, most often, correct a situation. (DCF is very often the avenue for exposing a truancy issue.) Steve Sortevik, following up on the challenge of all students in school, asked about their success rate. Both officers feel their relationships and communication with families is the key. Jennifer Iller asked about safety measures discussed at a previous meeting regarding students wearing I.D. badges during the day. She had hoped this would become part of the protocols for safety and security and that badges could be made utilizing the school pictures. Officer Thompson recalled the discussion from last year and stated she had not forgotten about this topic. Chair Pauline Proch asked about seeing a need for foster families on Nantucket, knowing few exist. Officer Thompson agreed there are less than a few, if any, designated foster families on island, therefore children would (in those situations) have to go off island. To mitigate removing a child from their familiar surroundings when DCF gets involved in the welfare of a child, they try very hard to keep the minors here on island. As this community is always so generous in times of need, foster care is also a place where islanders “step up” to help. The School Committee thanked the SROs and the Police Department and agreed how lucky they feel that we have the SRO program in our schools.

**School Improvement Plans**

Dr. Hallett introduced the four Principals and their School Improvement Plans. Each plan has four basic objectives: 1) Improvement in Student Learning and Achievement; 2) Increase Support, Equity, and Access for All Students; 3) Secure and Maximize Resources; 4) Champion a Culture of Inclusion, Collaboration and Communication.

**NHS, Principal Mandy Vasil**

Principal Mandy Vasil thanked the School Council and talked about revamping the School Improvement Plan a bit to incorporate the NEASC findings from the last few years. In high school the ‘Vision of a Graduate’ drives each objective. Aligning with the District Improvement Plan, NHS is looking to continue further development in curriculum work using Understanding by Design (UbD) across departments and vertically aligning curriculum with CPS. Also, with the Hybrid model, teachers will develop playlists and flex teaching that fits with the new learning platforms, including topics such as antiracism. By spring, there will be a schoolwide plan for academic and social emotional support for all students by implementing a multi-tiered system of support along with a comprehensive 9-12 school counselor curriculum and ways to determine unique learning profiles and needs for students. Principal Vasil referenced the continuation of Innovation Pathways, Lasell’s Dual Enrollment program, and family engagement among the focus of building bridges to support our students.

**CPS, Principal Michael Horton**

Principal Michael Horton thanked the School Council and reported months of work have been put into the Improvement Plan. He additionally thanked Dr. Hallett for the District Improvement Plan and how we are currently in Year 2 of a very comprehensive plan which makes it easy for CPS to determine their goals. The Middle School has set sights for 80% of the CPS students to meet or exceed ELA, Math and Science MAP RIT Goals. Another goal involved staff supporting SEL by

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improving MTSS practices aiming to disrupt patterns of inequity for both students and staff. Finally, CPS would also focus on transitioning from Google classroom to Schoology. Steve Sortevik, specific to teaching asked about the book *Stamped* being taught in Grade 8 and wanted to know “what is that?” Mr. Horton talked about this book brought in as part of anti-racist teaching in following through with recent resolutions adopted by the district.

**NIS, Principal Evemarie McNeil**

Principal Evemarie McNeil thanked the School Council, Assistant Principal Donna Johnson, and the team leaders. She referenced the very same objectives and then reviewed five goals that NIS has identified to coincide with the DIP and the focus for grades 3-5. These Goals are: 1 - Continue to drive instruction from data and results of the DESSA screener and MAP testing; 2- Remote and hybrid learning requires essential skills with learning targets as part of the environment; 3- Emphasis on social emotional well-being focusing on MTSS and culturally responsive Professional Development; 4- Physical safety of students and staff; and 5- Strengthening partnerships with families and offer supports to them to better support their children. Mrs. McNeil stated her staff has never worked harder, and she praised them for their steadfast efforts. Dr. Lepore asked about attendance in relation to virtual learning. Mrs. McNeil responded how students who are remote learners have to check in first thing in the morning and teachers continue to have those connections and touch base frequently through virtual learning.

**NES, Principal Kimberly Kubisch**

Principal Kimberly Kubisch thanked her very “healthy” School Council and mentioned what a diverse group it is now and how this leads to solid conversations. They reviewed the DIP and last year’s SIP, and with help from staff, formed NES Goals. Number one on their list is to use MAP testing to differentiate their instruction and utilize the MTSS Tiered System of supports. Principal Kubisch talked about keeping an eye on social emotional learning, having staff participate in PLC’s, Grade Level Teams and planning meetings, and sharing best practices to support each-others learning, especially with technology during the pandemic and hybrid learning models.

Steve Sortevik was very appreciative of the details and felt comfortable in how the schools addressed the new items for this year, especially referring to diversity and anti-racism. He furthered he would like to see those words used more explicitly in the SIPs. Jennifer Iller thanked all the School Councils members remembering how much work goes into each plan to drive improvement in our schools.

**Amendment to Policies**

**Homebound Instruction – IHBF**

Superintendent Hallett shared the Policy Committee has met a few times to review policies and two specifically have been updated and brought to the School Committee. Policy IHBF has updated to specifically respond to medical reasons for students to be out of the school. The Committee added a line referring to students at home or in a hospital for medical reasons and their ability to reach instruction.

**Social Media – IJNDD**

The current social media policy has been reviewed regularly, but changes over the years to social media platforms equates to revamping the language in this policy. Superintendent Hallett talked about more robust language within the policy to address clear boundaries for staff and students alike. Mr. Sortevik has significant issues with the edits and is uncomfortable with some of the changes and asked if this policy is directly pulled from MASC and/or has it been legally vetted. Zona Butler, a member of the Policy Committee stated the adjustments to current and sitting policy are made to address how social media has changed over the years. Dr. Hallett offered her research from many districts and her efforts to combine language to incorporate key areas to address proper decorum on social media sites, which resulted in the policy put before the School Committee. She added this stronger language is important because we must consider social media sites as a communication tool but with regulations, and therefore, free speech is not unlimited. It was agreed to reexamine some of the edits in the policy and have it vetted by our legal counsel before proceeding.

**FY22 Budget Development – Nantucket Community School – Director Tracy Roberts**

Mrs. Roberts determined NCS will live their budget from last year because the COVID-19 pandemic had such an impact on their programming as well as expenses and revenue, it is almost impossible to predict the budget landscape for the next year. The request for appropriation remains the same(\$550,000) to work in a projected budget of \$1,597,145. Funding comes

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from four sources: 7% are Gifts and Donations, 34% is the Town appropriation, 59% is collected registration fees. The fourth source is from state and federal grants. Mrs. Roberts stated that few changes will be made because of so many unknowns but realizing that the school buildings are closed to after-school and weekend programs, this is a large impact to their bottom line. She did need to morph two positions into one, which saved money in payroll and benefits, but more than that is hard to envision. Chair Proch, always sensitive to the demands on NCS especially relying on space and how the pandemic has determined much of the stoppage for their outreach, is very concerned in holding steady as NCS is vital to the community.

**FY22 Budget Development – Technology – Director Jennifer Erichsen**

The Technology Department is 3% of the Budget and has a payroll within their department of 48%. Technology had large demands placed on the department with the pandemic closures of last spring which forced the need to have devices in every student and staff members' hands. Due to this immediate need, Mrs. Erichsen shifted some funding for Professional Development and programming for Security and Communications. She is asking for a small increase for funding of \$24,000 for technology software to keep up with all of the demands. Recycling is also a large part of her programming, especially because of the heavy requirements with our 1:1 learning system. Steve Sortevik said he has personal knowledge from 2<sup>nd</sup> graders who want newer Chromebooks, batteries and chargers, so he hopes this can be accomplished. Jennifer Iller supported the idea of the increase in hardware, stating in a time when we are now so reliant of educating students with devices, this is an area that cannot be cut back.

**FY22 Budget Development – Facilities – Director Diane O'Neil**

Diane O'Neil said she has spoken with the Finance Director numerous times as COVID-19 has certainly shaped some of her budget. Facilities, Grounds and Security is 13% of the Budget with 51% of that budget as payroll. One main area of concern is supplies; Facilities provides all of the PPE gear and cleaning supplies, which is such an enormous expense this year and an unknown for next year. Additionally, grants helped us cover these costs and there is nothing indicating Grants will be available for next year. One area Mrs. O'Neil was less concerned with was the utility costs, as fuel and propane needs are down; she is comfortable moving \$20,000 from NES and NIS for fuel and propane, moving that to supplies. Mrs. O'Neil is watching the costs for the HVAC maintenance and repairs, as this has been ongoing, and is requesting an increase of \$55,000 with an additional increase of \$75,000 to cover contractors (plumbers, electricians, security technicians). Steve Sortevik concurred these are prudent increases. Tim Lepore was curious about the warm winter equating to less fuel and propane usage. Jenn Iller asked about the Green Communities refunds and reimbursements now that we are an active district and wanted to know if these can be used to offset some of the costs. Diane O'Neil referenced Margaret Song, our liaison, and that apparently this is 'in the works', but Mrs. O'Neil said she would follow up again.

**FY22 Budget Development – Athletics – Director Christopher Maury**

Chris Maury began by assuring the School Committee the unmasked students in the pictures of his budget presentation are from last year, not this year. Mr. Maury said his budget is level funded at 3% of the overall Budget and 68% represented by payroll. Athletics remains the same despite the pandemic, with similar numbers of athletes and similar programming as they progress through the year. It is his hope that all interscholastic sports move forward as the MIAA has sanctioned the opportunities for athletic competition, and he agrees that athletics are a vital component to students' well-being. Mrs. Iller asked about the chance of requesting monies to hire another Athletic Trainer- Mr. Maury said this would be a wish list item because having even one, as we do, is a rarity in a school district of our size, but he was happily on board if that came to fruition.

Dr. Lepore, unrelated to budget, asked if football is realistic as a winter sport for this year. Mr. Maury answered yes, the Fall 2 beginning February 22 is a 'go' for now from MIAA and EEA. Dr. Lepore asked about travel for officials and whether we can cut back expenses there, but Mr. Maury is eager to keep them happy because so few want to make the effort to travel to Nantucket. Mrs. Proch asked if he could expand on the recent developments for the next seasons of this year, including Winter and Spring Athletics. Mr. Maury again stated MIAA & EEA have both presented strict guidelines for winter and Nantucket will hold tryouts and conditioning to minimize the number of students selected for a team to follow the protocols of how many can be together at one time. CPS students will hold athletics after the first of the year as other schools off island are offering far less opportunities or not having middle school athletics due to the pandemic. Mr. Sortevik asked if MIAA analyzing numbers and watching this latest surge. Mr. Maury confident they are, talked about the state

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leaving the athletics decisions to a local level and Department of Health. He and the Superintendent are constantly monitoring the situation.

**Committee discussion and votes to be taken**

Vote to Approve Donation from MassHire Cape & Islands Workforce to NHS School to Career, \$1,100.00 Zona Butler made a motion to approve the donation, Tim Lepore seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve Donation from Nantucket Land Council, Grant for OpenSciEd Kit materials to CPS, \$3,000.00 Jennifer Iller made a motion to approve the donation, Zona Butler seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve Donation from Nantucket Fund for Emergency Relief, through CFN to CPS, \$750.00 Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the donation, Tim Lepore seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved

Vote to Approve Donation from Iorio Charitable Foundation for PTA (FONPS) to NES & NIS, \$3,000.00 each Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the donation, Zona Butler seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved

Vote to Approve Donation from John Hendrickson to NCS Community Pool, \$1,000.00, Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the donation, Zona Butler seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved

Vote to Approve Donation from Nantucket Fund for Emergency Relief, through CFN for NCS Danceworks and Teen Center/Graceline Grid2 Initiatives, \$54,000.00. Steve Sortevik asked if there are restrictions of this money, the Director said as long as it goes to rental space housing these opportunities. Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the donation, Tim Lepore seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved

Vote to Approve November 3, 2020 Meeting Minutes Steve Sortevik made a motion to approve the minutes, Tim Lepore seconded, with no one opposed, the motion was approved.

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

**Sub-Committee/Work Group**

Policy: Jennifer Iller and Zona Butler reviewed and amended a number of policies (stated previously)

Cape Cod Collaborative: Zona Butler asked about the bus driver situation noting the challenge to have enough drivers. Superintendent Hallett commented we are always looking for more drivers and now that we are making second runs to accommodate the ridership needs, it is early arrival for some students, but it seems to be working. The School Committee asked a lot of questions regarding waiting lists, bus licensure for drivers and transportation options. The Superintendent and the Director of Finance Martin Anguelov affirmed to the School Committee they are constantly looking to help alleviate the issues that come with the pandemic and bussing. Insurance, safety, and compliance are always at the fore front and they have been brainstorming ideas to find ways to make this situation easier for all. Mrs. Butler commented she has some ideas and will bring them forward, tomorrow.

Safety & Security: Not reported

Negotiations: Two meetings. Not reported

Ad Hoc: One meeting. Not reported. Steve Sortevik had a budget question regarding the Superintendent and Finance Directors' meeting on Friday with Town Manager and Town Finance Manager. He is concerned Ad Hoc subcommittee will not be invited and School Committee will not be represented, as TON promised Ad Hoc. Beth Hallett responded Ad Hoc has indeed already met, and this upcoming meeting is not a full TON meeting, it is an informal business meeting. Mr. Sortevik pressed his concern for the students and the need for more staff to offset the large gaps and missed learning from this year due to COVID. Dr. Hallett respectfully disagreed and reminded the School Committee that NPS has indeed added staff this year. Additionally, with lower enrollment numbers, she does not feel the same urgency, not to mention the School Committee has not yet seen the full school budget presentations. She also stated the district needs to make improvements with staff's instructional practices before simply adding more staff. Mr.

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Anguelov jumped in and restated how the original numbers from TON are not the same as now. With updated revenues reported to the School Committee last November meeting, this is better news and makes him cautiously optimistic. He furthered, NPS has been very open with TON about the needs of the school and having a positive relationship is important in nurturing our wishes. Jennifer Iller shared her desire to be invited to the meeting and that Ad Hoc committee members are quiet, and just listening, and should be present. There was further and intensified discussion about School Committee representation. Chair Proch asserted it is important to support the relationship between TON and the Superintendent as this will pay off dividends and asked the School Committee to wait and see and trust in our Superintendent and Director of Finance. Zona Butler shared her feeling of being included as well. Mrs. Logan O'Connor, through the Chair, reminded the School Committee Ad Hoc already took place last week and our Committee members were in attendance. She confirmed that while Ad Hoc was not active last year, it was requested by our School Committee and was indeed considered for resurrection by the Town Manager at our last year TON presentation, who upheld that promise. Mrs. O'Connor furthered that the previous Superintendent, W. Michael Cozort, had multiple informal meetings throughout his tenure with the Town Manager and Finance Manager. This was not unusual, nor did it include School Committee members.

**Student Council Representative**

Student Council Representative, Amanda Mack, shared Homecoming was a success despite it being very untraditional this year. Student Council worked hard to have floats and decorating ideas while adhering to the COVID safety protocols. She thanked everyone involved in Senior recognition and Chris Maury and Seanda Bartlett, Advisor for helping make Homecoming happen. Miss Mack also reported about the unusual December Delight this year, but everyone is working hard to make things work virtually with online auctions, a table at the farmers market, and pop-up shops.

**Horizon**

Budget, Enrollment, Bullying are on the agenda for next meeting January 5, 2021. Mrs. Proch asked to enlarge the scope of bullying reporting and asked to develop broader parameters. She would like to consider conversations with students and discover ways for students to find their voice to feel safe in having these conversations.

At 8:34pm the School Committee adjourned on a motion made by Zona Butler, seconded by Steve Sortevik, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Logan O'Connor, School Committee Clerk