



Northbridge Public Schools

Northbridge School Committee

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Michael LeBrasseur, Chairperson, mlebrasseur@nps.org,
Brian Paulhus, Steven Falconer, Allan Richards, Kathryn Atchue

Northbridge Public Schools School Committee Meeting Tuesday, February 23, 2021 7:00PM

Remote public attendance only via the Zoom Link in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20

- I. Call to Order (7:00)
- II. Statement regarding Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law
- III. Attendance

Michael LeBrasseur	Present
Steven Falconer	Present
Brian Paulhus	Present
Allan Richards	Present
Kathryn Atchue	Present

Also in attendance were Superintendent Amy McKinstry and Director of Business and Finance Melissa Walker

- IV. Statement of Audio and Video Recording
- V. Statement of Mission
- VI. Public Comment

Comments for this meeting may be emailed in advance of the 7:00 p.m. start time to school_committee@nps.org. All comments will be recorded in the record, and all attempts will be made to mention them live during the meeting. Any emails received during the meeting before the public comment period ends will also be attempted to be mentioned.

VII. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Amy McKinstry started her report by stating that NES would be celebrating the 100th day of school and dressing up as though they were 100 years old, as well as celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday and read across America. NES will also be hosting an upcoming spirit week. The week before students went on February break, Balmer participated in a kindness week where they read a story about kindness and were encouraged to do something kind. Balmer has also brought in many previously remote students into the hybrid model this week. At Northbridge Middle School, intramural sports will be starting next week and there are already 50 students registered and 10 parent volunteers. Learning hubs will be reinstated at the middle school starting March 1st and instructional rounds have already started. The next middle school parent meeting will be on March 4th at 6:30 pm. At Northbridge High School, the first day of their fall 2 football season has started and today was their first pre-season practice on the new Lasell Field. The high school leadership team has started to work on the MCAS and AP testing schedules. At the district level, the Special Education department held a virtual vacation academy during break and 21 students participated, and these will be running again during April vacation. NPS will be offering after school PD workshops to staff and staff from other schools, 10 hours each for 10 PDPs. They are currently interviewing candidates for the

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Interim Technology Director that will run through the end of the school year, and Amy praised the current technology staff for stepping up. The leadership team recently had a full day retreat for the strategic planning process and the next step of this process will be to have a full planning team meeting that will include everyone on March 3rd. Lastly, parents received a survey for preferences for social distancing and the return to in person learning, there are already 682 responses. This survey can be found on the district website.

VIII. Student Representative's Report

Student Representative Ruby Holtz was unable to attend the meeting. There was no report this meeting.

IX. Consent Agenda

A. School Committee Meeting Minutes from February 9, 2021

B. Warrant 41-34s \$429,243.55 February 18, 2021

A motion was made by Kathryn Atchue to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Steven Falconer. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael LeBrasseur	Yes
Steven Falconer	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Allan Richards	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.

X. Recognition

A. Promising Practices Recipient

Director of Curriculum, Jill Healy recognized Nicole Gannt, a kindergarten teacher at Northbridge Elementary School for being the recipient of the Promising Practices Award. There were 12 towns of the Blackstone Valley that put forth nominations and Nicole was the recipient because of her ability to persevere through challenges and creative innovative and effective ways to teach her students. She does a great job of identifying social emotional needs in learning and Jill was able to observe a mini lesson built to support students who are feeling frustrated and talk about how to share those feelings in a safe way. Nicole has a calm and comfortable classroom and all of her students love school. She supports her colleagues and has a positive impact on students.

XI. Presentation

A. Superintendent's Recommended FY22 Budget

Amy McKinstry and Melissa Walker presented the proposed budget "A New Beginning" to the School Committee. Amy recognized that it has been a challenging school year that has compromised the physical and mental well-being of many staff and students, and that equity achievement and personal success saw a decline. She also recognized that due to the unpredictable cause of this, plans have been more reactive than proactive, and next year is going to be a big transition year. The focus for the FY22 budget is a strong opening of the school district, supporting a successful transition of students to the new school, to meet academic and emotional needs of all NPS students where they are at the start of the school year, and to focus on building trusting and collaborative relationships with students and their families. For continued COVID-19 funding, there is an estimated \$931,432.00 allocation to help school systems safely transition to reopen schools. This amount is contingent on availability but she feels as though this is the likely amount the district will receive. This is available this coming year and the following year. This is not included in the FY22 operating budget and it will be used to address some focus areas such as staffing and resources. The FY22 budget process started in October, and they were tasked with a level services budget. This presentation expanded on what is included in the budget and went over the timeline as to how the budget has developed from October to February. Amy delved into the FY22 revenue current projections which included Chapter 70 state aid, town contribution, appropriation, grants, and revolver information. This presentation included where the money is going

to including salaries, out of district tuition and transportation, in district transportation, utilities, custodial maintenance, Title 1, technology, athletics, and all others. It broke down the budget into categories and the increases and decreased, salaries being the main driving factor for any increases. They discussed the reorganization of positions and the impact of the budget for the new school. They also included a glimpse into FY23 and projections for that budget.

XII. Action Items

A. Approve 2021-2022 School Calendar

A motion was made by Steven Falconer to approve the 2021-2022 School Calendar. The motion was seconded by Brian Paulhus. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael LeBrasseur	Yes
Steven Falconer	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Allan Richards	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.

B. Spring Town Meeting Requests/Warrant Article

A motion was made by Brian Paulhus to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Allan Richards. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael LeBrasseur	Yes
Steven Falconer	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Allan Richards	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.

XIII. Discussion

A. NHS Program of Studies

Aaron Katz presented information on the NHS Program of Studies. He advised that the summary sheets usually highlight new courses and sequences and that there are currently not many new sequences. The biggest addition to the Program of Studies is Project Lead the Way, which will be a new section. One new additional sequence chart will be for the academies to help teachers guide students. Tim McCormick advised that there will be new classes added to the science department that will be rolled out over the next 3 years.

B. FY22 Budget

The budget was presented earlier in the meeting and this time allowed for further discussion. Steven Falconer asked about out of district tuition and was advised that the out of district tuition includes special education private schools and does not include schools such as school choice and Norfolk Agricultural High School. There was also discussion regarding FY23 projections and the potential for budget shortfalls.

C. New NES Opening Plan

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Amy McKinstry started a discussion regarding the opening plan of the new Northbridge Elementary School and advised that while it is a work in progress, the planning team will involve a lot more people as they move through the planning phases. The decisions included in the plan that have already been made start with there being two strengths based principals in the building, one for academics and one for student support. There will be an assistant principal with a focus on teaching and learning and a dean of student support who will serve to handle attendance, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of the school while working with the Connect and Rise programs and PBIS. There will be grade level team leaders who are included in the building leadership team and they will have data based meetings and work on the school and district goals. In regards to the teaching and learning focus in the new school, Amy discussed some of the programs that would be utilized for preschoolers and in each subject being taught in the classrooms. There is a task force currently developing a new report card for grades K-5 and it will be completed in March. To assist in student support, staffing, and school culture, there will be an addition of a language-based resource room, continued Title 1 programming, WIN (what I need) blocks for students, surveying staff to develop a flexible staffing model to meet the needs of all students, and establishing a task force to align the most effective PBIS practices. Within the first two weeks at the new school, there will be a theme based, cross-curricular, team building unit where older students are paired with younger students. Some of the items still being worked on include student data, a master schedule, communication, and building transitions.

D. Disposal of Surplus Furniture – Balmer/NES

The School Building Committee is working with a company called IRN that will donate old school furniture to countries in need. Countries that have benefitted from this program in the past include Haiti, Jamaica, and Nicaragua. There is no cost to the operating budget to complete this; it is built in to the school building project cost. The furniture does need to be declared as a surplus in order to continue. Other town departments will be able to look and see if there is any furniture they would like to utilize.

E. Superintendent Evaluation Process

Michael LeBrasseur reviewed the timeline for the evaluation process. In April, the superintendent will submit her full evaluation and then the committee will review in May and finalize the process. In May there would be a deadline for the committee to ask any questions or any more evidence from Amy. Using last year's deadline, May 24th was the deadline for the committee to complete their evaluations. They have previously used Google Forms for this. In June, the committee will review the consolidated evaluation, as the new committee voted in, but this current committee will still be participating in the evaluation. On June 22nd, the current committee will review the final evaluation. This will be discussed again in May.

XIV. Information

A. School Committee Budget Subcommittee Meeting Minutes from October 13, 2020

B. School Committee Budget Subcommittee Meeting Minutes from February 4, 2021

XV. School Committee Individual Comments

XVI. Adjournment (9:00)

A motion was made by Steven Falconer to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Kathryn Atchue. The vote was taken by roll call vote and the following votes were recorded:

Michael LeBrasseur	Yes
Steven Falconer	Yes
Brian Paulhus	Yes
Allan Richards	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Yes

5 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote of 5-0.

Note: The listings of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting.

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Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. Also, the timeframe for each topic is a general guideline and may not be strictly adhered to.