



Northbridge Public Schools

Northbridge School Committee

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Northbridge Public Schools School Committee Meeting Agenda Tuesday, April 9, 2024 7:00PM Northbridge High School Media Center

- I. Call to Order (7:00PM)
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Attendance
 - Jill Leonard Present
 - Jonathan Canoy Present
 - Heather Alden Present
 - Shannon Canoy Present
 - Carl Cowen 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

Northbridge Public Schools is a proud community focused on the education and wellbeing of all students. We recognize each student as an individual, and we provide creative and innovative learning opportunities that encourage them to use their unique voices and personal strengths to achieve success both academically and personally.

- VI. Student Representative Report (7:05PM)

Caled was unable to attend as he was running the Volleyball tournament. His report was read by Jill Leonard. Quarter 3 report cards have been published in Infinite Campus

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4/9/2024. Active Minds, advised by Ms. Mason, led a presentation on the importance of Mental Health and helping those in need. Provided resources for those who needed it. National Honors Society running a gift card raffle. All proceeds are being donated to the National MS society. Tickets can be purchased in Cafeteria. Students are leaving this weekend for the Ireland Trip. Evening of the Arts is at NHS 4/10/2024 at 6PM. SATs are 4/11/2024. Ms. Mulkerrin hosted National Honors Society ceremony last week, and 4 more members were inducted.

VII. Superintendent's Report (7:10PM)

NES PTA provided Eclipses glasses for all of the students and teachers to be able to view the eclipse. NHS received some glasses from Ms. Lawrence. They are gathering them up to send to South American students, as that is where the next eclipse will be viewable from. 3rd, 4th, 5th grade students have just finished ELA MCAS testing. Grade 5 had the best showing for attendance for MCAS. Congratulated the 5th grade teachers for their diligence in motivating the students. Next round of MCAS at NES is 4/30/2024 with 5th grade math. Full schedule for all schools is on the district website.

Mobile Smiles Dentist visited NES 4/1/2024. Spent the whole day there and saw half the students who signed up. There will be a second day on 4/25/2024 at NES for the other half of the students.

Harlem Wizards visiting on May 5 at 2PM to play a game. Did a Pep rally at NES on 4/2/2024 to build excitement. Tickets still available at Harlem Wizard's website.

NES Kindergarten registration is open online. Child must be 5 years old by August 31st.

NES Preschool students are automatically enrolled.

Middle School running a book fair that started on 4/8/2024 and goes through 4/10/2024.

Goes from Homeroom through Dismissal.

Update on Incident at Middle School Marquee Sign. Someone vandalized it and changed it to something very inappropriate. Admin was able to change it quickly. Mr. Stien and NPD have been investigating. They have a good idea of who it was and are asking for any information people have to help.

Community Closet is open from 2:15Pm to 4:15PM on 4/10/2024 at Middle School.

Blackstone Valley Job Fair at Milford High. Met a lot of good candidates, some were former Northbridge Students. Collected a lot of resumes.

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4/10/2024 Celebration of Learning and Belonging as well as Evening of the Arts starting at 6PM. Have over 40 different exhibits. Larger showing this year than last year.

Strategic planning is underway. Have had a few meetings so far. Collected and looked over a lot of data. Identified some common themes in the information. Tomorrow, the Leadership team will be continuing to work on that.

Report Card Grades are available today in Infinite Campus. Next week is April Vacation.

Heather Alden attended the Strategic Planning Meeting as a mother to help.

VIII. Presentations (7:35 PM)

A. SADD in Action Presentation - Mr. Alan Finkel

Mr. Alan Finkel is the Advisor. Social Studies Teacher here almost 20 years. Started the SADD program a few years ago. The name has changed from Students Against Drunk Driving to Students Against Destructive Decisions. Also focuses on Mental Health and wellbeing. Mary Sullivan (vice president) and Elise Lowe (Treasurer) are here to also present. They are two of the most active members. They have been going to classrooms to present.

Have done a few events throughout the year. In October, held a Seatbelt Selfie Competition. Showing how easy it is to wear a seatbelt. At Homecoming, they did a bake sale and had a booth to educate parents and students about SADD. They do a Mental Health Awareness Pledge every year to have people to promise to look out for themselves and others. Had over 50 people sign the mental health pledges this year. They also handed out packets with information and resources that included: mental health definitions, advice on mental and physical health, and crisis intervention contacts.

Started a bulletin board and would occasionally change what was on the board to spread a new message or promote events. Partnered with Active Minds and shared the board.

Dating Violence Prevention presentations. 4/10/2024 will be the final presentation to the freshmen this year. They have already presented to the other High School Classes. Pairs of SADD students teach their classmates about this issue to explain what healthy relationships are and what unhealthy relationships are.

Random Acts of Kindness. People would buy bags of chips from SADD and write a small note to go with it, that would be delivered to the person it was purchased for. Just a small act of kindness to brighten someone's day randomly.

Drunk Driving Prevention/Safety for Prom. They gave a presentation for those attending Prom. Had Officer DeJordy share some sad stories about drunk driving. SADD members present slides to avoid drugs and alcohol, never operate under the influence, never become a sad statistic. They also ask students and their guardians to sign a Contract for Life, that states that if the child does need a safe ride home because they are under the influence, that the parents will give them that ride, no questions asked, until the next day when everyone is more rested and in their right mind to have a mature and open conversation.

Having a guest speaker this year: Lisa Brodeur and her son Kyle who have experienced tragedy with drunk driving.

Jill Leonard praised the students for their commitment and dedication to SADD and their fellow student's wellbeing. Likes the idea of the Contract for Life in helping to prevent bigger mistakes from happening. Heather Alden was curious as to when the name Changed to Destructive Decisions from Drunk Driving, because it was that when she was in school. Changing the name is a smart idea, because it is addressing the root problem, rather than a symptom of the problems.

B. Curriculum & Instruction Presentation - Mrs. Healy

Going over NES Literacy Strategic Plan and General updates in the district. Legislation will require all schools to have a Strategic Plan focused on Literacy in place to address the underperformance of children coming into school. This is to ensure all students have access to quality instruction.

Received a grant for about \$4K to help make this plan. The team to make this plan was: Jill Healy, Lorinda Allen, Lauren Dolan, Emily Spenser, Kerin Buma, and Stacy Lomonaco. Grant used to pay stipends for the teachers and substitute coverage for them. The plan is focused on Literacy and the Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

Attended DESE Meetings, developed measurable and attainable literacy goals and action steps, reviewed current research and best practices, collected and analyzed Data to identify the areas that required improvement, Established systems for monitoring literacy instructions and evaluating the impact on student achievement, and identify resources that can be used to implement targeted intervention.

Vision: At Northbridge Elementary School, we envision a future where every child possesses the foundational literacy skills essential for a lifetime of learning and success.

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Through innovative and evidence-based approaches, we strive to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive learning environment that fosters a deep love for reading. Writing, and communication.

Mission: Working towards an excellent ELA/Literacy education for every child, we will advance Evidence-Based Early Literacy through the following 5 goals: uninterrupted Learning Blocks, Redefining structure of Tier 1 Instruction, Identify high quality materials for Tiers 2 and 3 interventions, employ a comprehensive approach to assessment and data based decision making, Monitor the effectiveness across all 3 tiers.

Tier 1 is Instruction in General Classroom. Tier 2 is additional instruction for students who struggle with Tier 1 (handled in the classroom with scaffolding and differentiation), Tier 3 is separate instruction during the WIN block.

Goal 1: Uninterrupted learning Blocks: Dibbles Data. Quick 1 minute screener for all students. Identifies their phonics skills, letter naming, oral reading fluency. Lets us see where the student is and how effective the teaching has been. If a green student moves to yellow or red, it shows the amount of support is not enough. If they go from red or yellow to yellow or green, then the instruction is working. Showed statistics from last year compared to this year. Last year, all three tiers had good strength is Gr1 and Gr2. This year, the numbers went down as time went on. Looked at the Master Schedule at NES. Need to change and improve the block scheduling so the students in K-2 have a 90 minute block of uninterrupted learning while the students in 3-5 have at least 60 minutes of uninterrupted learning. These changes are research based, as the uninterrupted learning time helps the students to learn better.

Superintendent McKinstry asked why the proficiency went down. Ms. Healy stated it was multiple reasons and that the scheduling was part of that reason. Last year, the Elementary school had the uninterrupted learning time, this year they do not. Grade 2 was the only one that did not decrease, and the team doesn't know why.

Decided to keep the master schedule the same for the upcoming years, so the teachers can also get into a routine so they can maximize the learning. They had also changed the WIN group schedule. Kindergarten used to happen at 2 separate times to allow for small group instruction. This year, the Kindergarten WIN happens all at the same time, making it too large to be fully effective. Also suggested dividing Grade 1 WIN in half too. Library

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schedule is a 4 day rotating schedule. Schedule needs to ensure that the Library does not impact the literacy block.

Goal 2: Redefined Structure for Tier 1: Create a Shared Vision and Structure. Sent a survey to all of the teachers to get what their instruction looks like, how they use it, and how they deliver it. Learned that there need to be Non-Negotiables in literacy block so everyone receives the fundamentals of literacy. Provided a sample of what the 90 minute uninterrupted block might look like, broken down to the different sections of literacy. They also need to find a balance between whole group and small group learning, as both are essential to learning.

Goal 3: Evidence-Based Reading Interventions: Hinges on Tier 1. Did not have a systematic approach to Tier 3 WIN block. Teachers are providing their own material. Set goal to get a group of teachers to look at all Tier 2 resources and become very fluent in those skills for Tier 2, and used DESE guidelines to look at what was needed. Using ESSER funds, they purchased some Phonics Teaching kits. Hopefully by December 2024, hoping to have a vertical and horizontal alignment across Tier 2 and Tier 3.

Goal 4: Comprehensive Assessment Plan and Data Based Decision Making: We are strong in this goal. At Beginning, Middle, and End of year, use DIBELS 8 and Spelling Inventory are given to each student. Additional assessments (phonics and Phonological awareness) are given to the students who many need or do need interventions to help determine what kind. Once results are analyzed, WIN groups are made. Students receiving the small group intervention instruction are monitored every week to determine if the intervention is working and how well, in case it needs to be modified. Need to use information as a feeder into goal 5.

Goal 5: Monitor the Effectiveness of Instruction: Individual student monitoring is fine, but if you cannot see the whole grade, it is not as useful. Decided the best way is to bring back the old-school data walls. The walls will show where everyone started, and the movement of the stickers will show how well the instruction is going. It will be present and personal.

What is next: Final Meeting with DESE about plan April 24. Literacy Presentations to DESE June 4. Implement and Share the final plan with staff by September. Monitor and Manage Plan.

Jill Leonard agrees the larger blocks are better, because the transition times between classes takes longer with younger children, leaving less time to focus on learning.

Heather Alden pointed that everything that is old is becoming new again, as the district is pulling in a lot of older methods. Appreciated the slide showing a sample breakdown of what the 90 minutes of uninterrupted time actually would consist of.

Updates from district: 42 Booths at Celebration of learning and belonging and evening of arts. Math acceleration Academy over April vacation. 53 students have registered for the Academy. Received Grant for a Summer Acceleration Academy Grant for both ELA and Math. Receiving the Investigating History Implementation Grant. Year 1 the district will teach 2 units. Year 2 will teach all 5 units. There will be professional development for the teachers to use the Investigating History Implementation. Open Sci-Ed is approaching the last (3rd Year) of the grant. There will be some Professional Development for the teachers. It will be fully implemented in the Middle School. High School Teachers went to Plymouth to see it in action in the High School. The High School Teachers want to bring it to the High School, starting with a few units to see how well it works.

IX. Consent Agenda (8:00PM)

- A. School Committee Minutes 3-26-2024
- B. Warrant 24-39 3/28/2024 \$174,253.81
- C. Warrant 24-40 4/04/2024 \$198,786.54

A motion was made by Heather Alden to approve the consent Agenda. It was seconded by Jonathan Canoy.

Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes
Shannon Canoy	Yes
Jonathan Canoy	Yes
Carl Cowen	Yes

The motion was passed with a vote of 5-0

X. Discussion (8:05PM)

A. School Choice

Every year the school committee has to vote if we will continue to accept school choice students for the next year. As it does help with the budget, the Superintendent recommends keeping school choice active. Provided a Draft using a formula to determine when to close

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grades to school choice. Formula based around SPED numbers, as well as IEP and 504 numbers, compared to the entirety of the grade. Right now, based on formula, may not be accepting any school choice at the elementary school. Will likely have room in 6th and 7th grade. 8th grade is unsure. High School is always open to school choice. 9th grade is in flux as BVT does not get back to us until April 15th.

School Committee Decided to wait to vote until next meeting.

XI. Public Comment (8:30 PM)

XII. Action

A. FY25 Superintendent's Recommended Budget

Before voting, Chairperson Canoy opened the floor for any of the committee members to speak about the budget. A lot of hard work was put into this and a lot of difficult decisions were made. Does anticipate that after the vote, they will get the comments from the public, and welcome the people of the town to come and voice their thoughts and opinions.

A motion was made by Heather Alden to approve the Recommended Budget. It was seconded by Jonathan Canoy.

Jill Leonard Yes

Heather Alden Yes

Shannon Canoy Yes

Jonathan Canoy Yes

Carl Cowen Yes

The motion was passed with a vote of 5-0

XIII. Information

Superintendent McKinstry wanted to remind everyone that she and Melissa are hosting budget meetings to help educate anyone who wants to know how the budget is made. They had technical difficulties for the one earlier, but they will be hosting more. They are also willing to talk out of the meetings about how the budget is made. These presentations have been done for the NES and NMS staff already. They will be holding it for the NHS staff soon.

XIV. Adjournment (8:45 PM)

A motion was made by Heather Alden to adjourn. It was seconded by Jonathan Canoy.

Jill Leonard Yes

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Heather Alden	Yes
Shannon Canoy	Yes
Jonathan Canoy	Yes
Carl Cowen	Yes

The motion was passed with a vote of 5-0

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

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