



Northbridge Public Schools

Northbridge School Committee

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Erin Donahue, Chairperson, Edonahue@nps.org
Kathryn Atchue, Allan Richards, Jill Leonard, Heather Alden

Northbridge Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, November 8th, 2022 7:00PM Northbridge High School Media Center

I. Call to Order: The Meeting of the Northbridge School Committee was called to order by Erin Donahue at 7:00PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Attendance

Erin Donahue	Present
Allan Richards	Absent
Jill Leonard	Present
Heather Alden	Present
Kathryn Atchue	Absent

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

Brandon King of 75 Sheryl Drive attended the DESE Better Together Conference in October and found it enlightening. DESE is an advisory board and doesn't give black and white answers. They represent a promise of equitable education for all students. There have been several complaints from families that services for children in the district are not being met and the parents aren't being informed of this. Only if they ask their child are they finding out. Parents don't think the schools have the intention on informing them services aren't being met because the schools don't want to spend the money to outsource the service.

VII. Student Representative Report

Sara said that on October 19 NHS introduced its newest class of Nichols Honors students. Twelve freshman were formally inducted with a ceremony and toured campus and participated in leadership conferences. On November 4 the Science Club went to the New England Botanical Gardens. NMS is offering a Vaping Diversion Program for students involved in vaping. The program is being led by Lori Johnson, the School Nurse Leader. The Student Council is hosting a food drive in November, and each class year was assigned a food to donate. Thanksgiving baskets will be delivered to those in need. Fall sports are coming to an end. Winter sports start soon.

It is the policy of the Northbridge Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, or homelessness in its educational programs, services, activities, or employment.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

NES is hosting a food drive for Thanksgiving and to restock the food pantry. On December 13 at 7:00PM there will be a Winter Band and Chorus concert. The Boosterthon fundraiser raise \$16,800 for enrichment programs. NES will host a two day Winter Carnival in January with games, crafts and food. On May 4th NHS will host a corn hole tournament. MS administration will be attending a Unified Basketball virtual conference on November 9. Unified Basketball will begin in February. MS had their first Student of the Month meeting on Oct 19. Over 50 parents attended! Their next Student of the Month will be tomorrow, Nov. 9th. The MS fall sports ended on Thursday with an amazing 24-12-2 overall record among all teams. The student athletes represented the town of Northbridge very well, both in the classroom and on the athletic fields! The week of Nov. 1-4 MS had their 2nd ALICE training exercise for staff and students with Ofc. Dejorjy. The week ended with a table top discussion with the entire school. The week of November 1 teachers attended Alice Training. Wyatt Tetrault won the Ride to School with the police. Movie Night will be on November 18 at 6:30PM, Remember the Titans will be shown. Mr. Vickstrom will lead the MS Drama Club, it has over 40 students! NES and NMS will host a free mobile dental clinic on December 16. Families need to sign up in advance.

Professional Development was held at each school on November 8th. The topics included the following:

NES: PBIS and Pathways – ALL staff; K-5 curriculum alignment; data collection and SWIS overview (student support staff);

HS – UBD presentation: backwards design - worked on curriculum planning and ensuring units provided students with multiple levels of rigor and opportunities to apply their learning in different ways. Practical Strategies for Reducing Anxiety and Challenging Behaviors – (student support staff); Transition services and planning – RISE/IAs/Job Coach

MS - Revisiting the presentation to SC and parents – Q & A. Work in departmental groups on updating assessments and curriculum units to reflect greater opportunities for student success and broader applications of learning

Back in October, Charlie Baker signed the Mental Health ABC (Addressing Barriers to Care) Act which resulted in several new mandates and actions that specifically effect the educational system. a. State-wide student advisory committee will work with DESE to develop and implement school-based programs to address MH care, substance abuse, and coping skills. b. DESE will also have to develop a statewide program to help school districts plan, administer and manage behavioral health intervention services. c. Law states that “any principal, headmaster, superintendent, or decision-maker...when deciding consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed,” including, but not limited to, mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and collaborative problem solving. We are already ahead of the curve with this, as we revised our Pathways Program over the summer to decrease the number of suspensions, and we implemented PBIS across all schools. d. There is an expectation that each SC ensures that the district

has a written emergency response plan for medical and behavioral health crises for preventative and reactive procedures. NPS has one for each school building that is submitted to DESE at the beginning of each school year.

ALL report cards will be issued and accessed electronically through Infinite Campus on Thursday, November 10th. If a family isn't signed up they can request a paper copy.

IX. Consent Agenda

A. School Committee Meeting Minutes from 10/11/2022 and 10/25/2022

A motion was made by Heather Alden to approve the School Committee Minutes from October 11, 2022 and October 25, 2022. The motion was seconded by Jill Leonard. The vote was taken by roll call and the following votes were recorded:

Erin Donahue	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Absent
Allan Richards	Absent
Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes

3 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
The motion was accepted with a roll call vote 3-0.

B. Warrant 43-18s 10/27/2022 \$336,391.10

A motion was made by Heather Alden to approve Warrant 43-18s 10/27/2022 for \$336,391.10. The motion was seconded by Jill Leonard. The vote was taken by roll call and the following votes were recorded:

Erin Donahue	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Absent
Allan Richards	Absent
Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes

3 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
The motion was accepted with a roll call vote 3-0.

X. Discussion

Jennifer Mulkerrin, an Art Teacher at NHS, said that she is planning a trip for twenty-five Advanced Drawing and Mixed Media, Ceramics, Art Pathway juniors and seniors to visit the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, RI on November 29. They would visit the college, the museum, see art work, talk to students and have lunch.

A. HS Art Field Trip - RI School of Design (Mrs. Mulkerrin)

A motion was made by Heather Alden to move the HS Art Field Trip - RI School of Design discussion to an action item. The motion was seconded by Jill Leonard. The vote was taken by roll call and the following votes were recorded:

Erin Donahue	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Absent
Allan Richards	Absent
Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes

3 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote 3-0.

B. FY22 Budget Recap

Melissa Walker provided a recap of the fiscal year 2022 budget. The original amount budgeted for FY22 was \$28,932,495 and actual expenses came in at \$28,461,775, resulting in final expenses coming in under budget by \$470,720 or 1.63%. While there were increased expenses added to the budget due to additional staffing positions being added from COVID related grants, a lesser amount of expenses needed to be charged to the revolver accounts to balance the budget as operating expenses came in under budget. The categories of expenses that came in under budget included Salaries by \$702,044; Transportation by \$170,148; Utilities by \$113,939; and others by \$200,111. Out of District Tuition came in over budget by \$93,206, and additional grant expenditures totaling \$622,315 were added to the budget. A detailed account as to what caused each category to come in over or under budget was provided. Melissa also reviewed the projected versus actual revenue and expenses in the district revolver accounts for FY22, and explained the differences and impact on the FY22 ending revolver balance.

An update on the FY23 budget was also provided based on known budgetary changes as of the end of October. The original budget approved for FY23 was \$30,634,354 and “point in time” projected expenses are \$30,158,424, meaning that the current FY23 budget is trending under budget at the moment by \$475,930 or 1.55%. It was noted this only represents a point in time with some known updates to the original approved budget, such as salary updates for resignations/replacements, vacant positions, contract negotiations being finalized, as well as some other limited budget updates, but that these figures would continue to change as there were still vacant positions and depending on when those positions were filled and if they were filled over or under the original salary amount would continue to impact budgeted salary line items. It was also noted that out of district tuitions and transportation are both likely to be over budget based on current placements and current expenses, but that those figures have not been changed in the budget at this time as we are only a few month into the school year and other savings could occur within the budget to help offset those increased costs. The current salary savings realized to date may need to be reallocated to offset other budget lines that come in over budget, and for out of

district tuition, some special education grant funding is available that could help cover some of the overage that may occur. Updated revolver revenue and expense projections for FY23 were reviewed and it was noted that due to FY22 coming in under budget, as well as additional revolver revenue being received, additional revolver funds beyond what was projected when the FY23 budget was build, would be available to carry forward and help fund the FY24 budget.

Erin Donohue noted that although it was good news that additional revolver funds would be available to carry forward into the next budget year, she noted that we need to be guarded in that optimism as expenses in FY23 may come in higher than planned as we are only at the start of the year and that other emergencies may come up that revolver funds may need to be allocated towards.

C. FY24 Budget Parameters/Timeline

Melissa Walker reviewed the draft FY24 budget timeline with the school committee and reviewed the prior School Committee budget parameters that had been in place for the past several years, which included the direction being set forth to build a budget that was level services, but allowed for the flexibility for the reorganization of positions/programs to align with current needs, keeping the cost of such reorganizations as net neutral as possible. The intent would be to further review the budgetary direction upon notice of available revenue. Heather Alden stated that she thought keeping the same budget parameters in place for the FY24 budget made sense.

XI. Action

A. HS Art Field Trip - RI School of Design (Mrs. Mulkerrin)

A motion was made by Heather Alden to approve the HS Art Field Trip - RI School of Design. The motion was seconded by Jill Leonard. The vote was taken by roll call and the following votes were recorded:

Erin Donahue	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Absent
Allan Richards	Absent
Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes

3 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
The motion was accepted with a roll call vote 3-0.

B. Budget Subcommittee Appointment

A motion was made by Heather Alden to appoint Allan Richards to the Budget Subcommittee. The motion was seconded by Jill Leonard. The vote was taken by roll call and the following votes were recorded:

Erin Donahue	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Absent
Allan Richards	Absent
Jill Leonard	Yes

Heather Alden Yes

3 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
The motion was accepted with a roll call vote 3-0.

XII. School Committee Individual Comments

XIII. Information

- A. Wellness Minutes - 10/17/22 Meeting
- B. Staffing update

XIV. Adjournment: The Meeting of the Northbridge School Committee was called to adjourn by Heather Alden and seconded by Jill Leonard at 8:10 PM.

Erin Donahue	Yes
Kathryn Atchue	Absent
Allan Richards	Absent
Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes

3 members having voted in the affirmative
1 members having voted in the negative
The motion was accepted with a roll call vote 3-0