



# Northbridge Public Schools

## Northbridge School Committee

87 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, Massachusetts 01588 (508) 234-8156 FAX (508) 234-8469 www.nps.org

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

### Northbridge Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, September 13, 2022 7:00PM Northbridge High School Media Center

- I. Call to Order (7:00)
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Attendance

Erin Donahue	Present
Allan Richards	Present
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 (7:05)

Brandon King of 75 Sheryl Drive addressed several concerns to the Committee. He stated that parents seem to think that administrators are not taking teacher's opinions to heart when it comes to fitting students to assistants. He said that students become accustomed to their routines, and some assistants aren't considering that He feels that this isn't conducive, especially for special needs students, to continue and have a good start. He stated that he has a concern with the second grade Rise teacher. He noted that she is a new teacher and suggested that tenured assistants who know the students could help the teacher rather than having other teachers help. He said that there are actually 1:1 and other assistants who could facilitate that process better but they are not being used to do so.

He noted another concern regarding supply shortages, specifically paper and basic school needs. He said that he has personally reached out to a few teachers to see what they needed. His concern is that the need for supplies is there but it is not being conveyed. He said that the parents are receiving complaints from the teachers but that it stops there. He noted that he knows other people will help with the cost of some items and feels that it is a very solvable problem. Mr. King also said that he and other parents really appreciate all of the teachers hard work at the beginning of a challenging school year. He noted that there have been huge staff shortages but parents understand it. He wanted to convey his appreciation for the amount of work that the teachers and assistants are

putting in and that everybody is really coming together. He restated that it's been a really tough start this year

## VII. Student Representative Report (7:10)

Student Representative Sarah Cowen provided an update. The incoming freshman class of 2026 participated in Freshman Orientation on 8/24 to introduce them to NHS. Students were assigned to Link Leaders to guide them through the day. Students participated in group team building exercises, a tour of the school, and a barbeque that was attended by family and friends. Sarah said that Orientation was a huge success and provided the freshman class with a positive environment to welcome them to NHS. On 9/14, NHS will host a curriculum night where parents will be able to follow their student's schedule and meet their teachers to discuss curriculum, talk about their class and answer any questions. Club sign-ups will be held on 9/15 in the lobby. Students from each club will host a booth where students can sign up and get more information on the clubs that they're interested in. Sarah provided an update on the athletic teams and congratulated the teams on the great effort they have shown this season. On 9/10, a group of NHS students volunteered at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Worcester to package over 18,000 meals for community members in need.

## VIII. Presentations: (7:15)

### A. District Strategic Plan - Year Two

Superintendent McKinstry presented Year Two of the District Strategic Plan. The full presentation is attached to these minutes.

### B. Principals BOY Updates

NHS Principal Dawn Stockwell provided an update for the High School. On 8/15 a sports chemical health night was held and was well attended. Principal Stockwell thanked to everyone who helped with organizing the logistics of the sports teams. Freshman Orientation was very successful with 120 out of 143 students attending. Principal Stockwell thanked the organizers of the Link Crew. Professional Development included reviewing Safety evaluation and ALICE training with the help of SRO Tom DeJordy and there will be additional table talk discussions on 9/28 with staff and 9/29 with students. Class meetings were held on the first day of school where the district cell phone policy and students being tardy were discussed. Principal Stockwell noted that there has already been a decrease in the amount of phone issues and tardy students this year as compared to last year. The upcoming curriculum night, club fair, junior dodge ball tournament and spring corn hole tournament were discussed. Principal Stockwell was happy that the last 2 teaching positions should be filled by the end of September, and thanked Superintendent McKinstry for filling in and teaching English classes.

NMS Principal John Diorio informed the committee that there were 11 new hires in the building and talked about the importance of NMS being a community. He thanked the team at NMS for all of their help and dedication. The PBIS team is off to a strong start and it is the start of the second year of the house model. He said that the PBIS team has created a handbook and a flow chart matrix regarding expectations and include teaching lessons for staff. There are new clubs and athletics this year, including drama and weightlifting. Principal Diorio noted that on Friday 10/7 the special education students

will be hosting Palmer MS/HS which will include a pep rally followed by a basketball game and lunch. An intermural kickball team for special and regular education students is being formed and the districts of Douglas, Auburn and Hopedale have been invited to join. Upcoming events include a curriculum night, a Family Fun Run on 10/2 and a movie night to watch Hocus Pocus II at the end of October. Principal Diorio encouraged parents to join the Parent Army to help with community events and discussed the Honors lunch program.

NES Co-Principals Nick Hoffman and Lorinda Allen made a Fresh Start with Infinite Possibilities presentation to the Committee. Mr. Hoffman stated that there is now full use of the main grounds of NES and that traffic is moving smoothly dismissal is taking between 10-15 minutes. He added that supplies are trickling in. NES welcomed 17 new staff member and that staff participated in many team building activities on the first day of school. Ms. Allen discussed various academic programs including the Wonders reading program, ST math, ECRI (Enhanced Core Reading Instruction) and SRSD writing. Several new initiatives were also discussed to increase student and community involvement: a booster-thon, PBIS events, inclusive athletic activities, school council, parent volunteer training, a new PTA board and an Open House. Mr. Hoffman noted many program that will be occurring at NES to include the Kindergarten Fairy Tale Parade, band and chorus, after school enrichment opportunities, Spirit Week and fancy lunches.

#### C. Wellness Committee Report (Health Data)

Head Nurse Lori Johnson was grateful to say that the school year was starting with no COVID protocols in place. She stated that the first meeting of the Wellness Committee would occur within a couple of weeks and that the focus would be on the Youth First Behavior survey and the Youth First Behavior survey MS results from last year. Nurse Johnson added that the Vaping Diversion Program will be expanded to the MS and that it already exists at the HS.

### IX. Consent Agenda (7:35)

#### A. School Committee Meeting Minutes from August 23, 2022

A motion was made by Heather Alden to approve the School Committee Minutes from August 23, 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	Yes
Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes

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

#### B. Warrant 43-10s 09/01/2022 \$389,572.61

A motion was made by Heather Alden to approve Warrant 43-10s 09/01/2022 for \$389,572.61. 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	Yes
Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes

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

#### IX. Discussion (7:40)

##### A. Superintendent's Draft Goals

Superintendent McKinstry proposed the following three goals:

Professional Practice Goal: Enhance my leadership skills and be able to provide more in-house legal and human resource support to the district by enrolling in graduate courses and/or participating in workshops or other educational programs in these areas.

Student Learning Goal: Schedule and lead meetings with various groupings of leaders each month with a focus on aligning evaluation, feedback, programming and accountability practices.

District Improvement Goal: Provide administration and staff with culturally responsible leadership that promotes a culture of belonging.

Superintendent McKinstry discussed her professional practice goals. She mentioned that there have been many human resource, personnel and legal issues that have required attention and that she would like to enroll in some graduate courses that focus around the legal/human resource areas. Superintendent McKinstry's student learning goals include meeting with the various groups of leaders to be sure that the district is focusing on aligning, evaluation and feedback. She noted that there is a set agenda format so that the meeting minutes can be reviewed to continue to make sure that everything is on track. She also said that she would be conducting classroom visits with the principals and assistant principals which will be important this especially with evaluations. She wants to make sure that the evaluations are high quality and that the teachers are getting feedback to improve and progress their teaching practices. Full leadership meetings will be held monthly and information and communication with the building leaders will be important. The district improvement goal will be ongoing to build back the inclusive culture to create a sense of belonging and stressed the importance of students wanting to come to school and parent involvement. The DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) problems exist and conversations need to begin. The superintendent will participate in several program opportunities regarding DEI and feels this is very important.

##### B. School Committee Goals

The Committee discussed the possibility of having goals and it was suggested that any thoughts or ideas regarding goals should be emailed to the Chairman and/or Superintendent McKinstry.

X. Action

XI. Information

A. Staffing Update

Superintendent McKinstry noted the positions that were still open and shared that School Spring was being refreshed often. She said that interviews were being conducted non-stop and said that the staffing situation is a lot better than it was.

XII. School Committee Individual Comments (7:50)

XIII. Adjournment (8:22)

A motion was made by Heather Alden to adjourn. 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	Yes
Jill Leonard	Yes
Heather Alden	Yes

4 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

The motion was accepted with a roll call vote.

# District Strategic Action Plan 2021-2024 (Year Two)

**Strategic Objective #1:** Create an environment in which all leaders include multiple perspectives to collaborate on common goals and develop consistent and equitable practices and expectations that support the alignment of our schools and the success of the entire NPS community.

**Initiative #1:** Provide consistent and ongoing professional development to all school and district leaders on effective leadership skills.

Actions Steps	Who	When	Resources
Superintendent/principal walk-throughs and reflection discussions	Supt./principals	Monthly, per principal	Time; classroom visit framework
Re-institute monthly “Learning Walks” for leadership team to discuss effective practice and calibrate feedback	Building and district leaders	Monthly (one school per month - each school at least twice)	Time; materials

**Initiative #2:** Develop a strong sense of interconnectedness across building and district leadership teams to ensure shared accountability for ALL students.

Action Steps	Who	When	Resources
LT meetings w/directors and principals to conduct monthly updates; assess current needs; and address issues/concerns; accountability	Bldg. Admin & Directors	1st Wednesday of each month	Time
BIG LT meetings w/ALL admin. to conduct PD around calibration and feedback, as well as effective leadership strategies and DEI	Directors, Principals, APs	3rd Wednesday of each month	Time; PD materials; DEI books

"Job-alike" meetings (APs & Deans)	APs and Deans	Once per month	Time
Meetings with BIG LT and DC/Team Leaders to assess progress on: instructional programming; building culture; PBIS; SST/BCAP processes; WIN; and, new disciplinary procedures. (other topics as appropriate)	Building admin., CIA & SpEd Dir., Supt., DCs, Team Leaders, Instr. Coach, SEL Coord. (Business, Tech. & Facilities, as appropriate)	Once per quarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November</li> <li>• January</li> <li>• March</li> <li>• May</li> </ul>	Time; various materials

## Strategic Objective #2

**INCLUSIVE CULTURE:** Cultivate trusting relationships among all stakeholders, foster open and transparent communication practices, and create diverse opportunities to build connections and engage with families and community members in meaningful ways to promote a united and socially just NPS community.

**Initiative #1:** Provide parents/families with opportunities to take active roles in the schools and district and be a part of the decision-making process.

Action Steps	Who	When	Resources
Establish an EL Parent Advisory Group	Dir. of PPS; EL teachers	Sept. - ongoing	Translation services
Plan and offer "inclusive" extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for ALL students (and their families) to be active participants (i.e. intramural kickball, bocce, arts and crafts night, etc.)	Building admin.; team chairs	At least one activity per school (NES, NMS, NHS) over the course of the 2022-2023 SY	Equipment; volunteers; materials/supplies
Solicit parents from various subgroups (EL, SWD, LI, HN) to participate in School Councils	Building principals	ASAP	Volunteers; transportation (potentially); translation services (potentially)

<b>Initiative #2:</b> Support inclusive and culturally proficient practices, in and out of the classroom.			
<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>
DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) professional development for BIG LT	Leadership Team	August 10th, ongoing	Professional Development; M.A.S.S. REDI Guide, <i>The Person YOU Mean to Be</i> by Dolly Chug (Book Study)
Identify and train a group of stakeholders (staff/students and parents/community) who will develop the skills needed to lead and advocate the district's work around DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion)	Leadership Team - identify; SEL coordinator assist with development of training	Identify by November 15th; begin training by December 15th - ongoing	M.A.S.S. REDI Guide; Professional Development: written materials (book study); ESSER funding
Utilize DESE's Culturally Responsive Look Fors during Learning Walks to establish baseline data	District LT	Beginning in Oct. - ongoing thru year	Look-For documents;
Each building will host an inclusive athletic or extracurricular event/program to promote diverse participation and increase sense of belonging	Building admins.	MS - October; NES and HS dates TBD	Equipment; chaperones/volunteers
Expand Unified Sports Programming to Middle School	Athletic Director, MS principal	2022-2023 school year - TBD	Coaches; student volunteers; equipment/uniforms

### Strategic Objective #3

**TEACHING and LEARNING:** Provide engaging, inclusive and culturally proficient learning environments that nurture individual student growth and close access, academic and opportunity gaps through effective instructional practices, smooth transitions between grades (including grade 8-9), aligned curriculum, and robust student support.



**Initiative #1:** Implement flexible practices that support all learners and their changing needs throughout the year.

Actions Steps	Who	When	Resources
Revise, distribute and implement BCAPs (Building Curriculum Accommodation Plans) at each school	DCs/Team Leaders, Bldg. Admin.	Summer retreat and first PLCs	BCAP/DCAP documents
Utilize BCAPs as basis for SST (Student Support Team) referrals	Building admins. and teaching staff	Ongoing	DCAP/BCAP; SST Protocols Guide; Bldg. admin, Dir. of PPS, Dir. of CIA
Implement revised WIN block expectations across schools/grades to ensure students receive interventions with fidelity	ALL staff who teach a WIN block	Sept. - ongoing	Assessment data; DIBELs; CPT time; instructional coach
Continue enhancing co-teaching model and monitor and assess fidelity and effectiveness of implementation	All teachers of inclusion classrooms; co-teaching champions	Ongoing (since 2021-2022 SY)	Con't. co-teaching PD/coaching; Dir. of CIA; Dir. of PPS; co-teaching champions

**Initiative #2:** Recognize, respect and celebrate each student's strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning.

Actions Steps	Who	When	Resources
Develop a district-wide Celebration of Culture, Diversity & Interest in lieu of (former) Celebration of Learning	ALL staff; Supt.; Dir. of CIA	March, 2023	Student/staff volunteers; community participants; manipulatives; books
Develop a progression of learning goals with three levels of proficiency that provides clear communication to students and parents about the student's strengths and weaknesses on that learning target.	Teachers	August -ongoing	Instructional Coach; CPT time

**Initiative:** Effectively meet the diverse needs of ALL students by removing barriers that impede their success.

<b>Actions Steps</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Utilize the Understanding by Design® framework (UbD™ framework) to align curriculum, instruction and assessment, they will work to a common goal that maximizes learning outcomes for all students	Teachers	Sept. - ongoing	Professional Development; CPT time
Utilize BCAPs as basis for SST (Student Support Team) referrals to create stronger individual student support plans	Building admins. and teaching staff	Ongoing	DCAP/BCAP; SST Protocols Guide; Bldg. admin, Dir. of PPS, Dir. of CIA
Implement revised WIN block expectations across schools/grades to ensure ALL students receive necessary interventions	ALL staff who teach a WIN block	Sept. - ongoing	Assessment data; DIBELs; CPT time; instructional coach